# ATWATER MEMOIRS

Genealogy

Compliments of the Author

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# MEMOIRS

OF

# FRANCIS ATWATER

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## Half Century of Recollections of an Unusually Active Life.

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Considerable Space Devoted to the Progress of the City of Meriden and Its People.

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Enterprises Organized in Many Places Covering Varied Lines of Business.

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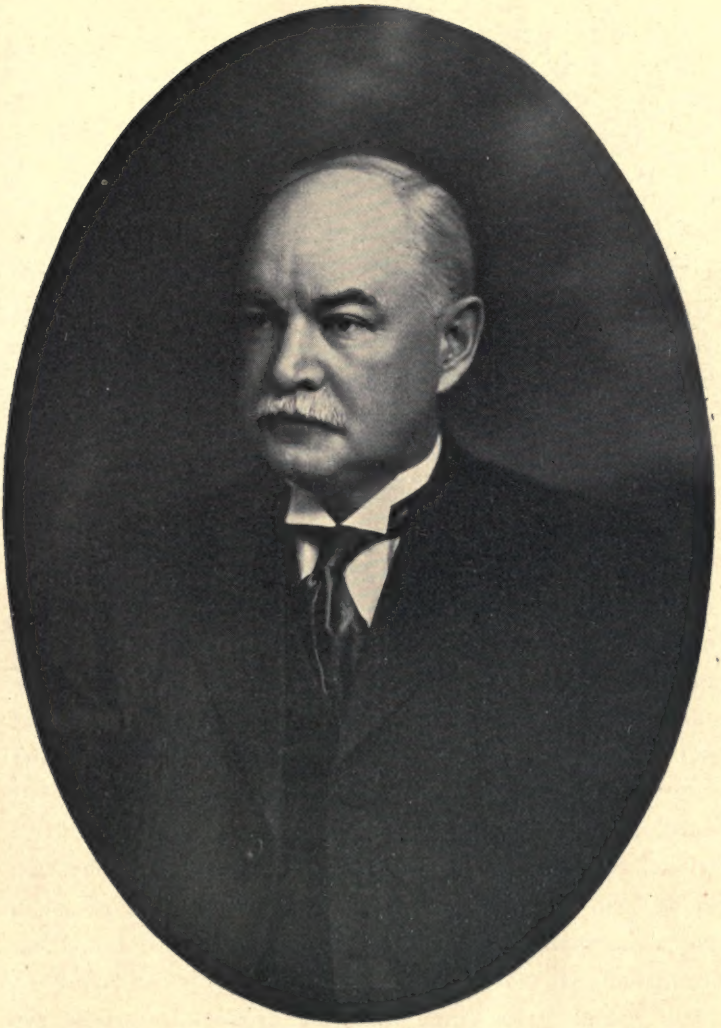
PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED.

Published by Horton Printing Co.
Meriden, Conn., 1922



HON. FRANCIS ATWATER.

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# PREFACE.

An admiring friend has persistently requested me to write an autobiography. The reason given was that I had had such a versatile experience that it should be preserved, not only as being entertaining and instructive, but showing what perseverance, even handicapped by early orphanage and years of ill health, might lead to.

I am in doubt whether this statement so earnestly maintained will be the judgment of those who may read the pages of this book, but being of an optimistic spirit, I trust its intrusion will do no harm if it does not do good.

The author, like all subjects of history, was born of poor but respectable parents. On the paternal side he decended from David Atwater who came from England in 1637, settled in the Colony of New Haven, Connecticut, and was the first signer of the planters' agreement. On the maternal side, his ancestor was Benjamin Fenn, one of the first deputy governors of the colony. There followed one Benjamin after another with titles of colonels, captains and lieutenants. These forefathers left their native land on account of religious persecution, but came to New England and established a church of much more severe discipline than any that could have driven them from home.

However they were men of strong convictions, sterling

character and industrious. Their descendants did much toward establishing the free institutions this country has since enjoyed.

Endowed with English, Scotch and some Irish blood, the writer has coped with various problems, and with an individual independence, has generally been successful in his different ventures. He has had few dull days, but many that were as long as the day had hours.

As considerable of his years were passed in or connected with the progress of the town or city of Meriden, Connecticut, probably a great deal of space will be given to its development and people. Enterprises in other parts however were no small factor and will be related in their turn.

He is probably the dean of newspaperdom in Connecticut, especially as a writer, printer and publisher. His activities were not confined to this state alone but covered the majority in the United States and also Cuba, and he has also indulged in other lines of business. His philanthropic work had much to do with the establishment of the American National Red Cross.

Covering such a variety of subjects and people there will be no word embellishment but brief and entertaining narratives founded upon fact and truth with malice toward none and charity for all.

What is written in regard to Meriden is what he has retained in memory. He may get a middle initial of somebody's name twisted. He does not pretend to be infallible but to average well. Having been connected with

daily newspapers all his life his effort is to tell what he knows briefly, simply, but as comprenhensively as possible. To his mind exact dates are abominable and weary reading. What difference does it make if it is Wednesday, July 15th, 1866, the middle of the week, the month or the year or you say over fifty years ago? In a book he published years ago, a typographical error occurred where a boy was born a few months before his parents were married. Seventeen years afterward the grandmother discovered the error. As she talked to him over the phone her voice fairly trembled. He must call in all the books at once. She said her grandson had not heard of his alleged disgrace and she did not know what he would do when he found it out. The writer is praying he will be six feet under the sod when that time occurs.

# AMERICAN ATWATER FAMILY.

## Early History of the First Settlers of Connecticut and Mode of Life.

The first Atwaters to come to America were David and Joshua and their sister Ann. Joshua became prominent in Connecticut and Massachusetts affairs, was married, had several children, but none to perpetuate the family name. The sister Ann, who probably attended to the household duties until the brothers married, is not mentioned afterwards. David, the ancestor of all Atwaters in this country until a comparatively recent date, left England in 1637. He was twenty-two years old when he landed in America. He had buried his father in November, 1636, and his mother the following January, and thus being liberated from filial duty joined the expedition of Kentish men who had become "infected with distemper for the authorized church." Their emigration is to be attributed to the discomfort experienced by the English Puritans in their native land, rather than to any attractiveness in this wilderness. It is impossible for those who have been surrounded with the security, beauty and plenty enjoyed by the posterity of these colonists, to conceive of the same territory as it was seen by their ancestors when they arrived, or as it presented itself to the eye of imagination when they decided to emigrate. This country to its present inhabitants, is their pleasant home; but the

Englishmen in the seventeenth century were uncomfortable in England, loved England as their dear native land, and thought of America as a foreign country, and as such, destitute of the attraction and charm which appertains to the ideal of home.

Moreover, emigration to the new world was not mere exile from a land they were reluctant to leave; it was exposure to suffering by cold and hunger, to peril of death by shipwreck, by wild beasts, and by treacherous savages. Such liabilities are, indeed, not unattractive to men whom love of adventure predominates; but the English Puritans were in general as free from that restlessness of mind which seeks relief in excitement as any people in the world. Religion, inclining them to sobriety and industry, fostered the love of home, of security and of comfort. Individuals among them may have been susceptible to love of adventure; but as a class, the planters of New England were men not naturally inclined to desert their homes, and expose themselves to hardships and perils of the ocean and in the wilderness. On the contrary their training had been such as inclined them to remain in their native land. This is true of even the unmarried men, like David and Joshua Atwater, but the reluctance to emigrate was far greater when one must expose sister, wife and children to hardships they were less able than the men to bear.

It was a great undertaking to prepare for a voyage across the Atlantic and a permnent residence in the new world. The ministers could embark perhaps, with their books and household stuff, but merchants and owners of real estate needed several months, after deciding to emigrate, for the conversion of their assets in to money, or into merchandise suitable for the adventure in which they were engaging. Yet these young men, Joshua, who

was a mercer, disposed of his goods, while David sold the real estate to which they had only been in possession of a short time, when they joined a company which projected something more than emigration. They were not to scatter themselves when they disembarked, among the different settlements already established in New England, but to remain together and lay a foundation for a new and isolated community. For this reason a more comprehensive outfit was necessary than if they had expected to become incorporated individually or collectively, in communities already planted. In addition to the stores shipped by individuals, there must be many things provided for the common good, by persons acting in behalf of the whole company. There is evidence, that after the expedition arrived in New Haven, its affairs were managed like those of a joint stock association and, therefore, some ground for believing that from the beginning, those who agreed to emigrate in this company, or at least some of them, associated themselves together as partners in the profit and loss of the adventure.

These early emigrants were advised to have victuals with them for a "twelve-month," to bring good stores of clothing and bedding; paper and linseed oil for the windows, with cotton yarn for the lamps. They were taught to ballast the ships with iron, steel, lead, nails, and other heavy articles of utility; also bricks. One Atwater house, supposed to have been built by Thomas, a son of David, the emigrant, when torn down nearly 200 years later, had bricks taken from it with "London" stamped upon them. The bulk of the cargo carried consisted of wearing apparel, bedding, food, tools, arms, ammunition and seed. Neat cattle and goats were usually taken, sometimes horses. Two months was perhaps the average time consumed in sailing from London to Bos-

ton in the vessels of that day. A passage was, indeed, sometimes made in less time, but in other instances was protracted to three months. A vessel made but one round trip a year, leaving England in the spring and arriving home in the autumn. Crowded cabins rendered the passage uncomfortable, even when speedy; but a protracted voyage often induced not only discomfort but disease.

It was in the summer of 1737 that the Atwaters landed on the coast near Boston. With others Joshua and David had heard from the Pequot Indian war of the land west of the Connecticut river. It was known in modern orthography as Quinnipiac. Joshua was included in an exploring party to look this over. It was too late in the year to send a report back to Boston and build houses in sufficient numbers to shelter women and children, so Joshua and six others remained through the winter, being sheltered by a hut situated near a creek. We may imagine they spent their time in hewing, clearing and sawing, in hunting and trapping, and in collecting by means of barter with the natives, beavers and other furs for the European market. What communication they had that winter with those in Boston must have been by Indian runners who could easily perform such service. It is probable they had commenced negotiations with the Indians for their land, built huts and made all possible provisions for the arrival of those who were to come in the spring, which included David Atwater and his sister Ann.

It was on Friday when they left Boston, and, as they are said to have spent a fortnight on the voyage, it was the latter part of the week when they arrived. On the Sabbath they worshiped under an oak tree near the landing place. The purchase of the land had probably been perfected in April though no written deed was signed until

the following November. The natives were, therefore, expecting the large re-enforcement received by the six Englishmen, one having died in the winter, with whom they were now well acquainted. They welcomed the newcomers and were pleased to have in their neighborhood a plantation of Englishmen, to which they might retreat when molested by their enemies and where they might barter their venisons, pelts and furs, for the much admired tools and trinkets of the English. They, now for the first time, saw English women and children and admired them with great curiosity. The planters brought with them or procured from Massachusetts, plants and seeds which soon yielded what they had been accustomed to enjoy in England. Grains, especially wheat, rye and peas were sown, and the reward was most bountiful. Then came the fencing in of land, pounds and pound keepers, David Atwater was appointed on a committee to see that swine were not allowed to stray from home and to provide penalties. Subsequently he appeared before the general court to explain why his own hogs were allowed to run around loose.

This was the beginning of what was termed for many years the colony of New Haven. The Quinnipiac river flowed through meadow land, and for three miles were salt meadows on both sides. It was near this river in what was known as the Cedar Hill district that David, the emigrant, took up his abiding place, a farm of some 160 acres. He was rated at this time as being worth 500 pounds, which for those days was a good sized fortune. The temporary shelters, which the first planters of New England provided for their families till they could erect permanent dwellings were of different kinds. Some planters carried tents with them to the place chosen for the new home; some built wigwams like those of the natives.

Either specie would suffice for summer, but for winter they usually built huts, as they called them, similar to the later log cabins in the forests of the west, though, in some instances, if not in most, they were roofed after the English fashion of thatch. It was a peculiarity of New Haven that cellars were used for temporary habitations. They were, as the name suggests, partially underground and perhaps in most cases on the hillside. Rev. Michael Wigglesworth, who came to Quinnipiac with his parents in October, 1638, when he was seven years old, describes the cellar in which the family spent the first winter, as covered with earth on the roof. Such a covering might be effectual to exclude the cold winter winds, but it was a poor protection from heavy rains. When an old man he remembered how he had, while asleep, been drenched with water permeating the muddy roof and had been afflicted in consequence with a dangerous illness.

The diet of the planters consisted chiefly of domestic products, though it was only a short period before commerce with the West Indies was started, when the tables of the wealthy were supplied with sugar and foreign fruits. Indeed, there were many Atwaters who engaged in trading with these islands, bringing rum and molasses in their own ships and exchanging commodities raised at home and later mules and manufactured goods. These same Atwaters traded clocks in the south for the mules which they drove north and held until ready to ship. Only a short time ago an old barn in New Haven was pointed out to me as the place where the mules were sheltered. Kine and sheep were few during the early years of the Atwaters, but there was such an abundance of game that the scarcity of mutton and beef was but a small inconvenience. In towns venison brought in by English or Indian hunters was usually to be obtained, and at the farms

wild geese, turkeys, pigeons, moose and deer were so plentiful that no household was without a bountiful supply. The rivers were full of fish, while at the sea shore clams, oysters and mussels could be obtained for the gathering.

A brew house was an early requisite demanded by the settlers and beer was as regularly on the table as bread. It is unnecessary to state that it was not of the 2.75 variety, but had a good stiff kick in it. Indeed, as late as my boyhood, it was customary to serve a hot toddy (cider brandy, sugar and hot water) to the minister when he made a friendly call. I well remember one stately, old gentleman, who wore the old fashioned stock instead of a collar, when he came to our house one afternoon. It was after he had been entertained by several parishioners when it was noticed that it was not a reverential but another kind of "spirit" that prompted his performance. I had no evidence that a New England Atwater ever distilled spirits. The nearest approach to one was a cider mill owned by my grandfather, the product, a good share of which went to a still owned by a nearby neighbor. The Atwaters, as old time merchants, sold both cider brandy and West India rum. I do not believe they were teetotalers, but always had in the house and used liquor moderately and with good judgment. There was no comparison in quality of those days with the adulterated product of the present generation.

It must have been some years after David settled in New Haven before he married Damaris Sayre, daughter of Thomas Sayre of Southampton, L. I. There is no tradition as to how or when he met her. Indeed, it was not until 1881 that it was discovered who she was. A gentleman looking over the probate records of Southampton reading the will of Thomas Sayre, found that he left for-

ty shillings to his daughter "Damaris, wife of David Atwater, of New Haven." Thomas Sayre was a native of Bedfordshire, England. Two houses built by him and his son Thomas about 1648 were still standing a few years ago, when they were demolished. The Sayre family were of high principles and as prominent as any on Long Island. David and Damaris were the parents of ten children. The whole ten took part in the early history of New Haven. The daughters married men of prominence. The first child married when she was twenty years old, John Austin. Most of their children died young. David, Joshua and John, however, had families whose descendants are numerous.

The second daughter, named after her mother, also married in her twentieth year. Her husband was John Punderson, only son of Deacon and Margaret Punderson. The father was an early immigrant. From him descended all the Pundersons in the country. There were three John Pundersons deacons of the First church of New Haven in succession.

David Atwater, the first son, married some one by the name of Joanna, which to this day is all that is known of her. It is supposed that he lived upon and cultivated a portion of the land originally assigned to his father. There was a two-story brick house standing until burned ten years ago, which according to tradition, this David built. The land is still in possession of his descendants. He had two daughtes who married Bradleys. His son Joshua continued to cultivate the farm after his father's death.

The next son, Joshua, married Sarah Rockwell and settled in Wallingford. He died a comparatively young man, leaving no children.

John, the fifth son, from whom descended the North

Carolina branch, married Abigail Mansfield. He took over the farm left by his brother Joshua. Before doing so he had learned to be a weaver and probably earned his living in New Haven working at his trade. At any rate he was ever after called "Weaver." All of his children married, except Mercy, whom I found no record of except her birth. Not one of them left their native town, but all raised families that were an honor to their community.

The fourth son was Jonathan. He married Ruth, daughter of Rev. Jeremiah Peck. He had eleven children. He was the merchant prince of New Haven, and his profits must have satisfied his ambition. The inventory of his estate found in the probate records, covers over eight closely written pages and gives a variety of objects, great and small, suggestive not only of wealth but of the processes of its acquisition. There were several farms with tracts of land amounting to four thousand acres; province bills and interest bearing notes, a stock of merchandise for a retail store, indicating barter in local produce and in manufactures from beyond the seas, such as fine cutlery, broadcloth, Turkish wrought cushions; a wardrobe containing a number of coats with silver buttons; a gold seal ring, an ivory headed cane and a gold watch, and finally three negros. His whole estate was appraised at 15,323 pounds, which was nearly half as much as the official valuation of all estates in New Haven. This inventory is full of suggestions concerning the life of those early times. Its list tells of energy, industry and thrift. He lived to the ripe old age of ninety-four years.

Abigail, the third daughter, married Nathaniel Jones, son of Rev. Samuel Stow aand Hope Fletcher, and like her brother-in-law, John Punderson, he was one of the promi-

nent men of New Haven. They had two daughters and one son.

Mary, the fourth daughter, married Ichabod Stow, son of Rev. Samuel Stow and Hope Fletcher, and for her second husband David Robinson. One daughter of Ichabod Stow married Jehiel Hawley, whose daughter Esther married David Beecher, grandfather of Henry Ward Beecher, the famous preacher.

The fifth son, Samuel, married Sarah Alling. He was a farmer and cultivated a portion of the land which had belonged to his father. He had a family of ten children. He was my projenitor. My line down was Samuel, Timothy, Wyllys and Henry. They were all farmers, except my father who had learned the trade of a stone mason and later became a contractor.

The youngest son of David was Ebenezer, who married Abigail Heaton. They had three daughters and one son. He was a tailor and lived in New Haven.

We have now accounted for the ten children of David Atwater. He lived to see them all happily married and established as good citizens, upright, honest and respected.

In the list of names of "Proprietors, New Haven, Conn. in year 1685," appear the names of David Atwater, Senior; David Atwater, Junior; John Atwater and Johnathan Atwater, the last three being sons of David Atwater, Senior.

Besides the town lot assigned to him, as to each of the original settlers, the plantation assigned to David Atwater in the original division of lands among the planters was in the Neck, between Mill and Quinnipiac rivers, at the north side of what is now the city of New Haven. The general name of Cedar Hill has been given to this region. Descendants of David Atwater still reside there,

The eldest male representative in each succeeding generation was born, and for a time, at least, resided there.

David Atwater died October 5, 1692. His wife died April 7, 1691. His will is dated a week later, April 14, 1691, with an appendix dated December 9, 1691. Examination of the will, in connection with knowledge obtained from other sources, affords information of interest to all his descendants. One of his six sons, Joshua, had removed to Wallingford. One of his four daughters, the eldest child, Mercy, who married John Austin, appears not to have been then living by the terms of the will in relation to her children.

There are special bequests of lands to each of the surviving five sons, David, John, Johnathan, Samuel and Ebenezer, determined in relation to the portions of the estate already received by each.

Two of the sons had already been established in business in New Haven, namely Johnathan, whose name appears in the list of "Proprietors of New Haven, Conn., in year 1685," the bequests to him being, in the words of the will, "besides what also he hath already received," and the youngest son and child, Ebenezer.

The portions of the estate already received by these two sons may be conjectured to have been requisite money capital for business, and possibly the town lot assigned to David in the original division of the lands, with its improvements and the house and land formerly owned and occupied by Joshua, on what was known as Fleet street, bought by David from Joshua 19th of June, 1665, after the removal of Joshua to Boston—which house is said to have been occupied by the descendants of David more than two hundred years—neither of these properties appearing in the inventory of his estate in 1692. To each

of the three remaining sons there is a specific bequest of a homestead.

To David Atwater, Jr., whose name was in the list of Proprietors in 1685, as follows:

"Item. I doe Ratify and Confirm to David Atwater, Junior, my eldest son, my old House, Barn and Orchard, which he already possesseth, and twelve acres, lying on both sides ye creek, adjoining to meadow of Isaac Turner's and twenty acres of upland, ten in ye Cornfield and ten in ye Neck, south of that peese of land fensed in on ye west side of Road and ye Rock."

To John Atwater, ancestor of the North Carolina branch, whose name was in the list of Proprietors in 1685, as follows:

"Item. I doe give and bequeath unto my son, John Attwater, ye House and accommodations at Wallingford, with ye Rights and Privileges and appurtances thereunto belonging, which I bought formerly Ephriam Young's land, and one acre more of silt marsh of Samuel Potter, with two acres of meadow I had of John Dod, next ye River, lying near my son David's." . .

To Samuel Atwater, whose name was not in the list of Proprietors in 1685, as follows: "Item. For all the rest of my lands, both uplands and meadow, with my dwelling house, barn and other buildings, with the Orchard, privileges and appurtances, I give to my son, Samuel, to be to him and to his Heires forever.

"And for these lands and meadows, above mentioned, given to my other sons, my will is that it be to them and to their Heirs forever. And my further will is, if any sons see cause to sell any of their lands, they shall first offer it to their Brothers, that they may have ye first refusal."

It would appear that there had been three divisions of

lands to the planters, according to their original agreement, the third division, as indicated in the inventory, being about one hundred acres to him:

"Item. From my owne 3d Division, and what I had of my son John, I give and bequeath unto my four sons, David, Johnathan, Samuel and Ebenezer, to be equally divided between them.

"And for all ye Rest of my personal estate, movables and stock of cattle, my will is it be equally divided between all my children, at least to ye value of it, my Grandchildren, sons of my daughter Austin, to be included for one share."

On the day of the marriage of Ebenezer, the youngest son and child, to Abigail Heaton, which was the last of the marriages of his ten children, David Atwater could doubtless reflect that, upon the execution of his will, each of his eight surviving children would be established in life with a place of residence. On that day, December 9, 1691, he recorded his great thoughtfulness and equal care for all his children in an appendix to his will, without the formality of witnesses, in these words:

"Know all men whom it may concern, that I, David Attwater, Senior, Doe, upon further consideration, and from a desire to promote love and peace among my children, and to make, as neere as I can, an equal distribution of that estate which God hath given me, I do hereby, as my will, give to each of my children, out of Samuel's part, five pounds, to be paid out of ye stock of cattle or as he may think best."

Probate record: "This appendix to ye will admitted by all of ye children and ye Court as if proved by witnesses. Agrees with ye original text.

"Wm. Jones, Clerk."

These extracts from the will of David Attwater, of

Royton in Lenham and Cedar Hill, New Haven, of natural interest to all who trace their lineage to him, whether they bear his name or not, may appropriately end with its opening and closing words:

"Know all men by these presents, that I, David Attwater, Senior, of New Haven, in ye Colony of Connecticut in New England, though weak of body, yet of competent, sound understanding and memory, do make and ordain this as my last will and testament, in manner and form following:

"Imprimis. I commend my soul unto the hands of God, through Jesus Christ, my redeemer, and my body to the earth, to be buried in a comely and decent manner, according to the discression of my executors hereafter named.

"Lastly. I do hereby constitute and appoint my loving son-in-law, John Punderson, and my son, Samuell, to be Executors of this, my last will and testament. And Capt. Moses Mansfield, Overseer. And doe order my son-in-law, John Punderson, and my son Samuell, to pay him twenty shillings for his trouble. And I doe hereby revoke and make void all former will or wills. And declare this to be my last will and testament."

The early Atwaters who descended from David, with the exception of Jonathan, who was called the merchant prince, and Ebenezer, who was a tailor, were nearly all farmers, living peaceful and frugal lives. They mostly settled near the old homestead, but finally began to scatter, the first one to leave settling in Wallingford, some miles away. One farm acquired at this time still remains in the family, belonging to a descendant of the seventh generaton.

Jeremiah, son of Johnathan, was also a merchant and, like his father, a man of a great deal of enterprise. It is

a tradition that upon one occasion he ordered a keg of nails from some distant place. Upon opening the keg he found a top layer of nails and underneath all silver dollars. He remonstrated to the seller he had bought nails not silver dollars, but the reply came he had ordered nails and nails they must be. Therefore, inasmuch as the dollars had come to him in the mysterious providence of God, and were not gained by any labor of forethought of his own, he gave a portion in the form of a baptismal basin for the service and worship of God. Whether this story is true or not he did present a silver bowl to the First Church of Christ in New Haven and it is still in existence.

In 1718 Jeremiah was called a "brazier". He with two others were authorized by the General Assembly of Connecticut to set up a mill to improve linseed and rape oil. The law protected them for a period of twenty years under a penalty of 50 pounds for any violation against others starting in that line of business. In 1721 he was master of a sloop from Boston. Smallpox prevailed at that time. He was ordered to have the goods he shipped well aired before being exposed for sale.

The spirit of adventure broke out in Caleb, a grandson of David, about 1749 when he took his family and moved to Dutchess county, New York. It was Caleb's grandson, Stephen, who apparently made the first break from the orthodox church. At any rate he became a Quaker. His grandson, Hon. Richard Mead Atwater, says it was the pretty eyes of his grandmother, Huldah Mead, which not only captivated Stephen, but changed his religious conviction. Huldah did a good job for I have known many of her descendants and no better citizens exist.

In the fourth generation family ties became shattered

very generally. Caleb Atwater, of Wallingford, a very successful merchant, bought from the state of Connecticut several thousand acres of land in the Western Reserve, or later the state of Ohio. One township named Atwater, another named Granger and also Geneva, Ohio, he was proprietor of all the land. He had fifty-five grandchildren to whom he gave 100 acres apiece and then divided the balance of his land among his children. He carried on the manufacture of gunpowder during the revolutionary war.

Ambrose Atwater settled in Vermont where he brought up a large family.

Jeremiah was steward of Yale college for twenty years. He seems to have been the first Atwater to have anything to do with that college. We are not informed if he was educated there, but presume from his holding office that he was.

Freeman Atwater became one of the first settlers and founders of Canandaigua, N. Y. His brother Elihu, became a lawyer, who migrated to Florida where he left a long line of descendants.

Abigail, daughter of Caleb, married Dr. John T. Andrews, and removed to Atwater, Ohio. Two of her sons became distinguished lawyers.

Merab, daughter of Reuben, married Stephen Rowe Bradley, who settled in Vermont. He was United States senator and served several sessions.

Elizabeth Mary Ann, another daughter of Reuben, married Gen. Andrew Hull, of Cheshire, Conn., who was elected to the Legislature for twenty sessions.

Noah Atwater was a Congregational minister in Westfield, Mass., having graduated with first honors of his class. Jason was another minister who settled in Branford.

Moses Atwater was probably the first one of the family to study for medicine. He graduated from Yale college. He was the first doctor in Canandaigua, N. Y., where he enjoyed for a long period an extensive practice. His brother Jeremiah located in the same town but beame blind before his death in 1861.

Jeremiah Atwater was the first president of Middlebury college, Vermont. Lyman Atwater was acting president of Princeton college for many years. If he had not had a mind of his own and been subservient to others he could have been its president. He no doubt was the most able man who ever filled a chair in Princeton. He was spoken of as having a "prodigious versatility of mind." Another college president was John Milton Atwater, who succeeded President Garfield as president of Hiram college; his brother Amzi was vice-president of the University of Indiana, while another brother, Orris, was a professor in Hiram college. A sister was teacher in the Fisk university of Tennessee. Some of the sons were ministers.

Jotham Atwater was one of the first surveyors to lay out the state of Ohio. He afterwards settled in Mantua, Ohio. His brother Amzi, who had previously settled in the same town, was an elder in the newly-formed Disciple church. A sister who married David Pond about the same time, joined the Mormon movement. She, with five of her children, followed the Prophet Joseph Smith, to Missouri, but finally straggled back to her brother's home, who provided for her as long as she lived.

We have in the family several Episcopalian misisters; some Baptists, some Methodists and one Catholic Priest. Many Atwaters were educators, professors in colleges, principals of academies and teachers in seminaries. Other were eminent writers. Judge Caleb Atwater was the ear-

ly historian of Ohio. He was also an author of innumerable essays. His works are often quoted to-day. Some turned to fiction. No doubt many of you have read the interesting books of Mrs. Anne Caroline Mason. She is a sister of Richard Mead Atwater. His sons were educated in mining and scientific lines, and, I am proud to say, have been very successful in their chosen fields.

The family, as a rule, have not been blessed with extreme wealth, although three or four have disgraced themselves, according to Andrew Carnegie, having died millionaires. I have visited our people from Nova Scotia to Florida on the eastern coast, through the middle states and up and down the Pacific slope. I found nearly all in comfortable circumstances; very few in extreme poverty. They are an ambitious lot; hard workers; few shirkers.

As the historian of the family, I may say I have given as much time as I could spare for thirty-five years, to endeavor to perpetuate unto posterity the characteristics of the family.

I called upon John W. Atwater, of Thomaston, Ga., in March 1906. He had been a Methodist exhorter for over half a century. He was in bed, and as his brother told me he was worn out, a victim of the old-fashioned shouting and ranting preaching, which I hope had passed away. It was only natural he should ask what church I attended, but when informed I did not attend any, that the Golden Rule was my guide, though I confessed I did not always live up to it, he said that he was sorry, and his expression was truly pathetic. He had lived a narrow life, spent in a small sphere, which was as painful for me to comprehend as my liberal ideas were for him to tolerate. I cannot help but believe his teachings brought more fear than comfort.

Prof. W. O. Atwater was one of the leading scientific men of his day. He was connected with Wesleyan college, Middletown, Conn. He experimented for a long period to ascertain what would best maintain the human system. He proved, to himself at least, that four ounces of alchohol used daily was beneficial. He was a very temperate man, if not a teetotaller. Yet the W. C. T. U. denounced him from one end of the country to the other. However, being an Atwater, and as stated before about others, having a mind of his own, I do not believe it disturbed him one bit.

I knew and honored the late James W. Atwater of Thomaston, Ga., whom I visited on two occasions. He told me much of his career. Of course, his fortune was swept away during the Civil War, but his energy predominated, and I found him over eighty years old situated in a large, roomy house, surrounded with luxury and comfort and a devoted family. His son James made his success in business life as a banker. His city honored him with the office of mayor, his district as senator, and his state as quartemaster general, with the rank of major; he was ten years captain of the Upson Guards, Co. H. Second Infantry, and is now retired with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He also has had considerable experience as a manufacturer. He stands high in the Masonic ranks.

My own brother, Dorence, visited down there years ago, but the hospital doors were not then thrown open. He was a Union prisoner and after passing through other prisons landed at Andersonville where some of the family reside to-day. He spent twenty-two months there. He was a gifted penman. The Confederate officer told him if he would keep the list of prisoners who died there it would be exchanged with the federal government. Believing this would never be carried out, he kept a secret list in

his own coat lining. It numbered nearly 14,000. When he was released he notified the government what he had. Arrangements were made to copy it and Dorence again enlisted as a soldier and was detailed as a clerk in Washington. While the government had copied his rolls it refused to give them back. He notified the war department that if the work was done immediately, it was then June, 1865, he could identify all the graves. With forty letterers and joiners he was sent to Andersonville to do this work. He had to have his own rolls to work from. When he returned the government demanded the rolls and he refused to give them up, claiming them his own property. He was arrested, court-martialed and sent to states prison at hard labor for eighteen months and stand committed until the rolls were returned. He was there two months when the government, fearing a congressional investigation, he was discharged without the grace of a pardon. He had been a prisoner of both the south and the north. I may add, years afterward I succeeded in having the court-martial set aside by Congress. Subsequently he said the word soldier made him mad while the sight of a uniform made him froth at the mouth. Becoming disgusted with the United States he spent his life in the far-off southern seas and his remains are now buried in his island home of Tahiti.

Many of the family were and are doctors. John Phelps Atwater, who lived in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., was a practitioner there. He had foresight and sagacity. Years ago he invested a few thousand dollars in Chicago land. When he died he was reputed to be a millionaire. Dr. David F. Atwater of Springfield, Mass., lived to the ripe old age of 98 years. Besides a comfortable fortune accumulated by himself his brother bequeathed him over

half a million dollars, out of an estate that inventoried over $1,600,000.

Many of the Atwaters lived to be from 90 to over 100 years old, and nearly all so far as I can learn were well preserved at their advanced age.

The compiler of the Atwater History for many years searched far and near to learn something of the career of Enos Atwater, who some time in the latter part of the seventeenth century left his father's farm in Cheshire, Conn., to locate far from home, in Staunton, Va. He came of good stock. His brothers, Asaph and Heman, served in the Revolutionary war. His sister, Mehitable, married Eli Bronson of the neighboring town of Waterbury and raised a distinguished family. His brother Heman acquired from his father 100 acres of land in the town of Southington. This was in 1784, the price being 251 pounds. Here was established the "Atwater Mills," which have been in continous operation ever since, although not in the same location. His sister Keziah married Amos Rice, while Anne married Nathan Gaylord, both farmers who lived and died in Cheshire, Conn.

Asaph married Ann Dibble. He went to Torrington, Conn., some thirty miles from his father's home. Here he reared a large family. He evidently had inherited some of the pioneer blood of his ancestry for he started for the sparsely settled west in its earliest days. In this connection the writer has never been able to trace his movements. By mere accident he learned of the existence of some of his descendants now living in Pennsylvania.

Enos, who married Hannah Moss, had the military rank of captain of militia in 1776. His father was John, who married Elizabeth Mix. They settled upon a farm in Cheshire, Conn., where they lived all their lives. The writer

knows its location, but all evidence of the buildings thereon have long since been obliterated.

His great grandfather was also John, who married Abigail Mansfield. He left New Haven to settle in Wallingford on a farm owned by his brother Joshua. This John was a son of the pioneer David.

I have tried in vain to find some reason why Enos should have gone to the then far off south. Possibly he may have joined some sailing expedition that landed in Virginia. I have read carefully and studied conditions in Cheshire to find if there was any concerted movement of the young men to leave home, but only found scattering incidences, few and far between. It may be a fact that Enos was given a horse, and with his few belongings rolled up journeyed leisurely through the states of Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland into Virginia, where no doubt he found employment on some farm. Possibly it was the daughter of his employer that made it an attractive proposition to settle nearby, where his children were born. This was undoubtedly in Virginia for it is a matter of tradition that Titus, his son, with his wife riding the same horse, went from Virginia to make their home in North Carolina.

I have found some satisfaction in the years of search and study. When I first took up untying the ramifications of the family the only clue I had was that Enos went south and located in Orange County, North Carolina. At that time I had never heard of any Atwater south of Washington. Then I learned of the election to Congress of John Wilbur Atwater. Correspondence followed and I was told the descendants all traced back to Enos. I confess not much progress has been made since except I have practically gathered as a unit nearly all of

the progeny of Enos. It is possible Enos' grave and that of his wife might be found with a stone telling dates of death, dates of birth, and her maiden name. The forefathers of Enos were very particular to erect headstones to departed members, and this reverence of family was a trait of nearly all of his brothers and sisters as I have witnessed in visiting the cemeteries where their kindred are buried.

Enos was baptized in the Congregational faith. This was true of all of the Atwaters in the first century of their establishment in this country. David, Joshua and Ann, the immigrants, left their home because of religious persecution. Yet as soon as they reached these friendly shores they helped establish a creed of intolerable hardships. Everybody was obliged to contribute and participate in its success.

At any rate, the Atwaters have never been followers of traditions. They have had minds of their own and have followed the bent of their convictions, even if it were against popular sentiment and peril to life and fortune. So we find them associating themselves with new creeds as they developed, repudiating the old established church that the first settlers adopted, while many are believers in the golden rule and have cast aside both church and creed.

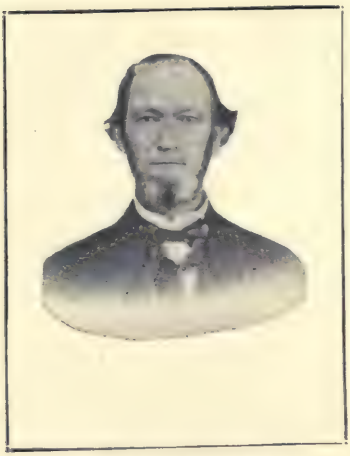
# MEMOIRS AND HISTORY.

## Author's Youthful Life and Conditions in Meriden As He Found Them.

The writer was born in a country village in the town of Plymouth, Conn., where his parents were born and resided all their lives. Their names were Henry Atwater and Catherine Fenn. There were eight children, of which I was the youngest. My mother died in 1863 and my father in 1865. I was then six and one-half years old. A guardian took charge of a small inheritance, which was exhausted in two years. Then commenced the struggle for existence on a farm. In those days a boy of tender years was expected to do a man's work, at least that was the situation I was placed in. The farmers I worked for, because I was an orphan, undertook to force me to do work beyond my youthful strength, using a cart-whip or a horse-whip, but soon desisted when they found I could make good use of handy piles of stones or wood.

### PRINTER FORTY-FOUR YEARS.

At eleven and a half years of age I gave up agricultural life to become a printer, to continue in the trade for forty-four years. I had little schooling, but enough so that aptness in my new work furnished sufficient education to accomplish the manifold duties of a busy life



HENRY ATWATER
My Father.

CATHERINE FENN ATWATER
My Mother.

FRANCIS ATWATER
Printer's Devil.

FRANCIS ATWATER
Foreman at 16.

in many fields of adventure. Perhaps the early hardships served a purpose, for in after years I worked early and late with never a thought of fatigue.

## HAD NERVOUS EXHAUSTION.

Thus was spent my youthful days until I was eighteen when I was overcome by nervous exhaustion. Six months were spent in Dr. James Jackson's water cure in Dansville, N. Y. Subsequently I started the Wallingford Forum, a weekly newspaper, my first venture in business, which after a year was sold. Then I worked at my trade in various cities, finally winding up in Hartford, Conn., where I was assistant foreman of the Hartford Courant, and in the meantime was married to a very estimable lady who has been my faithful companion for forty-three years. A year or so later lung trouble developed with hemorrhages, pleurisy, and pneumonia occurring on many occasions for a period of twenty years.

## PREPARED MY OBITUARY.

Forty years ago Dr. Westlake of Red Bluff, Cal., where I had gone for my health, said my right lung was entirely gone, my left one practically so, and I could not not positively last two weeks. The good old soul long ago passed to the beyond, and I know if he could now express himself he would say he was glad his diagnosis was wrong. On one occasion, years later, Dr. O. J. D. Hughes, of Meriden, and Dr. Frank H. Whittemore, of New Haven expressed the opinion I had only a few days to live. My associate Lew Allen, was so far convinced of this fact that he prepared my obituary. All three have passed on. Surviving this little detail, Mr. Allen told me of his con-

cern, but said he had destroyed his manuscript, so I never knew just how much charity covered my faults. At this time, another dear friend, William A. Kelsey, took matters in his hands, went to New York and sought one of the most eminent specialists, in organic troubles of the day. He brought Dr. William H. Porter to my bedside, who by skilled treatment returned me to health. Mr. Kelsey and Dr. Porter certainly have my heartfelt gratitude.

WILLIAM A. KELSEY.

These personal details have been gone over briefly. Perhaps they are not important, but they furnish the foundation of the accomplishments that followed as stated in the preface under adverse circumstances.

I came to Meriden, Conn., in July, 1865. The family home was broken up after my father died, and the eight children scattered to as many places. I left Terryville by stage coach to the depot, thence by train to New Britain, Berlin and Meriden. As I lived off and on in the town and had much to do with its history for fifty-seven years, I will relate my early impressions.

## EARLY DAYS IN MERIDEN.

Upon my arrival I was driven to my aunt's house on Britannia Street in Levi Merriam's old hack. The street was sparsely settled. The eastern part ran through a swamp, which was covered with woods and underbrush. It has been drained by a sewer laid down to Center street. Where the Connecticut Telephone and Electric Company shop now stands was a cranberry bog on which I picked many quarts of berries. There was a small two-story shop with basement standing there. It was owned by Newton P. Whittelsey. He was an inventor and die-sinker. All of this property was the Frary farm and the shop had been built by James Frary. I believe he was the one who later was the partner in the Lander, Frary & Clark company of New Britain. At any rate the old shop still stands and is incorporated into the chain of new buildings which now cover the cranberry bog.

## MY OLD SCHOOL MATES.

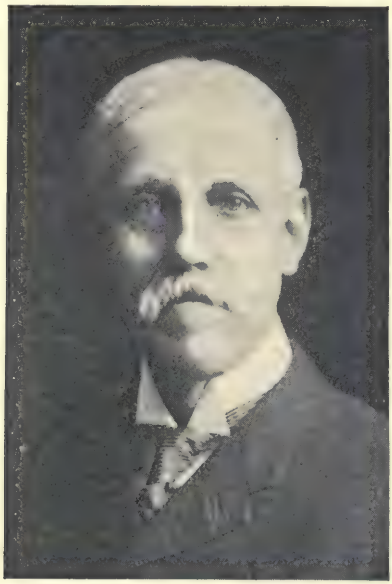
I went to school in the little one-room school house where the larger building now stands on upper Colony street. The old building was removed to what is now the Colt shop property and is still standing. The older boys I remember were Junius S. Norton, W. O. Butler and Thomas S. Alexander, all dead. I believe the teacher was Emma Gay. This was just after the close of the Civil War. It was a daily sight to see two-horse wagons, covered over with hoops and white canvas, carrying gunpowder from Hazardville to be forwarded to the government arsenals.

I lived on Britannia street nine months when I was sent to live at my uncle's hotel in New Haven. From there to board and go to school in what is now the Milldale district in Southington. My introduction was by being pitched on by several boys when I entered the gate. I wielded my dinner pail successfully. The consequence was several bruised heads and a dented pail. Peace prevailed afterward. This has nothing to do with Meriden history, except thirty-two years afterward electric railways had been put into practical use and I organized the Meriden, Southington and Compounce Tramway Company, put the fourteen miles of railway in operation, thus connecting Meriden with the surrounding country to the west, and built the road through my old school district.

## APPRENTICE IN PRINTING OFFICE.

In 1870 I became an apprentice in the printing office of the Meriden Literary Recorder under the propietorship of the late Luther G. Riggs, one of the brainiest men I ever knew. The city editor was the late T. T. Mansfield, father of Mrs. George M. Curtis. He was a great lover of music. He played the organ at the "Corner" church and kept a music store in the old Meriden House. F. E. Callender occupied part of it as a jewelry store. It was here Henry M. Mather came to work for Mr. Callender, whom he succeeded. The combination moved to the Palace block when it was built. James F. Gill used to drive the stage between South Meriden and Meriden, which he quit to enter Mansfield's music store. Afterward he succeeded to the business as did Fred Weber to Mr. Mather's business. Mr. Mansfield was of a friendly jovial disposition, was talented and liked by all who knew him. Henry A. Foster was organist at St. Andrew's church. He no doubt was the jolliest man in town. Everybody was

his friend. He was not over prompt in paying his bills. He bought from the Meriden Silver Plate Company some goods. Statements were sent every month regularly, until one month, it was overlooked or the amount charged off. Henry noticed the omission, jokingly entered the office and protested he was entitled to an apology for the neglect. Henry had a hearty laugh. It was as good as a



JAMES F. GILL.

ray of sunshine on a rainy day to meet him. Another man who was a little heartier than Foster was Charles H. Shaw, the lawyer. When Denman Thompson played, "The Old Homestead" in Meriden the first time Shaw responded so spontaneously that it attracted Thompson's attention. They were inseparable friends ever after when Thompson came to town.

# PRIMITIVE CONDITIONS.

## Struggles of Many Meriden North End Manufacturers Who Finally Succumbed.

When I first came to town Harbor brook was an open sewer and indeed for years afterward. There were wood bridges across it on East Main street and on South Colony street. Later stone arches were built. Probably few people realize in passing Morse & Cook block that the street is over a double arch and that the block itself also spans the stream. At Main street crossing the railroad track has been raised several feet. At one time when Baldwin's dam gave way the water covered the track quite deep. South Colony street back of the Journal office has been raised seventeen feet. Anywhere in the center of Meriden excavating a few feet deep will uncover bogs and swamp dirt.

Hanover street back in the 70's used to be a veritable mud hole in wet weather. Cook park, owned by the late Jared R. Cook, took in a whole square from the Bradley & Hubbard shop on the west to Cook Avenue. Mr. Cook built the large house that is now the main part of the Meriden Hospital. He was tall, broad shouldered and of powerful build. He was a large contractor and built most of the stone-arch bridges that spanned Harbor brook I believe none of his decendants are alive. He was a captain in the civil war.

It is needless to say there was no paving or sidewalks in fact what sidewalks there were in town, Meriden had not then become a city, were narrow strips of tar and gravel construction following the contour of the land. Coming down Colony street there were two quite steep hillocks which had to be climbed and descended. One opposite about the residence where C. J. Danaher now lives and the other in front of the Edmund Parker place, corner of Colony and Washington streets. An old school house stood opposite the E. J. Doolittle house. This was raised in order to beautify the grounds for the use of the Connecticut School for Boys. A new one was erected to take its place on Columbia street.

Colony street was widened in front of the H. C. Wilcox property. The stone wall standing there now was taken down and relaid. The maple trees were quite large at this time, but were successfully transplanted and are now the big shade trees that beautify the street.

John D. Billard erected in 1865 the handsome home now occupied by his grandson. It was while passing it one Sunday morning I saw the ruins of the Foster & Merriam plant which had been entirely destroyed by fire the night before. I was on my way to attend services and Sunday school at the Congregational church, which was a solemn looking affair, standing some forty feet from the street behind a high iron fence. The minister did not make much impression on my young mind as I fail to recall his name. I sat in the gallery with other mischievous boys and indulged in boyish pranks. The late James A. Beadle sang in the choir and looked down upon us with unapproving glances, and sometimes using a warning finger. Mr. Beadle and the late Welcome E. Benham were sanctimonious leaders not only on Sunday, but in everything pertaining to daily life. Mr. Beadle held it was a

mortal sin to publish and sell Sunday newspapers and endeavored to evoke the old blue laws to prevent their sales. Mr. Benham believed in the teaching of the Bible literally, for it is said he plucked out his eye because it had unwisely offended him. He sold books for a living in his early days. When a lad I saw him in Terryville. He drove a one-horse wagon which had a large square

WELCOME E. BENHAM

[illegible] fitted to the rear in which he carried his stock [illegible] trade. Mr. Benham was the prime mover in securing [illegible] present Y. M. C. A. building. He solicited subscriptions [illegible] and gave liberally himself to make the fund a success. He was president of the association for a number of [illegible] years. He had his peculiarities, but nevertheless was a

substantial citizen. Which reminds me of another one who was Joseph A. Coe, known the country over as "Bible-leaf" Coe. For years he bought Bibles, had the backs cut off and distributed the leaves to passersby. Not only did he do it locally but upon trains, going as far as New Orleans. So far as known he paid for the books

JOSEPH E. COE

and his expenses from his own resources. While people generally ridiculed him he never paid any attention to the jibes and insults offered, but did his work cheerfully and uncomplainingly. He abominated tobacco and likened its users to swine.

Another gentleman, who visited Terryville regularly driving a one-horse, old fashioned tin peddler's wagon

RUSSELL HALL.

was the late Russell Hall, whose son is still in the same line of business on East Main street. Although I was less than five years old when my mother dickered rags for tinware, brooms, mops, kettles, etc., with Mr. Hall, I remember the transactions as plainly as if they occurred only yesterday. Mr. Hall was considered a shrewd trader, yet his customers felt that they were getting their money's worth and were dealing with an honest man. This was probably about 1862-3. Mr. Hall and I discussed our first meeting when we met.

The only factory in the north end, besides the little one on Britannia street, was the old Meriden Malleable Iron company. It had its vicissitudes until the end. Hobart Hull was the first manager, followed by Patrick J. Clark, and he by George W. Lyon. At the close it manufactured lamps and lavatory goods. Each one was confident that he could make it a success and each had his disappointment. Probably no one knows how much money was sunk in the venture. I was president of the Meriden Board of Trade when we raised some $10,000, which added to the $20,000 paid by the Sears-Roebuck Company, made some $30,000 that the mortgagees accepted for a property that was estimated had cost $200,000.

Later the Beecher Manufacturing company was established on Center street. It did a drop-forging business. It too struggled on for years, but finally succumbed in financial disaster. It was sold to the M. B. Schenck company and the old buildings have been incorporated into the new.

Then came the Chapman Manufacturing company which manufactured saddlery hardware and sleigh bells. It located in and enlarged the old Whittelsey shop. It was in a hoodoo district. The company survived for years but finally dwindled out and the business was wound up.

There was another daring venture started where the Napier-Bliss company is now for the manufacture of glass, flint glass, such as is used by Meriden's numerous cut glass shops. It started off with glowing prospects, but it too petered out.

Then came the big failure of the Wilcox & White company, which undoubtly was due to one local bank refusing to renew its notes, and in turn caused other out-of town banks to do the same thing. This concern originally made parlor organs. It sold to dealers on long time notes, but as these could not be realized upon, the company was obliged to go in insolvency. Had the banks refrained for a short time there can be no doubt that the company would have pulled through and paid its debts in full. It was just at this time that the Angelus self-playing piano was developed.

The Meriden Bronze company was the next north end tragedy. It was managed for many years by Samuel H. Foster. He was succeeded by Agustus H. Jones. It made a variety of lamps. It apparently did a big business. When its doors closed it was inventoried at about $200,000, but like the Malleable Iron company sold for something like $30,000. In this same building was installed the Meriden Thread company. It was fathered by Judson C. Perkins who undertook to finance it in an unique way, but only to meet with disaster. The J. D. Bergen company are now the owners of the real estate.

Following all these disasters was the Breckenridge Manufacturing company. Like the Malleable Iron company and the Meriden Bronze company it manufactured chandeliers and lamps. It struggled on for many years but lack of money sealed its fate.

Probably $1,000,000 would not cover the losses sustain-

ed by these different failures in the north end. All of the successful companies today cover the ashes of ambition, hope, disappointment, and the bitterness of abject failure of the pioneers who started after my advent into Meriden, all of whom have passed to the great beyond.

Before any of these north end failures was the collossal one of the Wilcox Woolen Mill on Pratt street. Jedediah Wilcox, who organized the company was a brother of Dennis and Horace C. Wilcox who organized the Meriden Britannia company. Jedediah branched out quite lavishly. He built the mansion on Broad street, now owned by Dexter Parker. It is said to have cost $100,000. It no doubt is the most costly house in Meriden.

The old wooden block in which Eugene A. Hall has a meat market was run as a boarding house. It was owned by the Rogers family. It was familiarly known as the "hash house." The Rogers came from Saybrook. There were Hervey, Cephas, Gilbert, George Washington, Wilbur and Nathaniel. George W. was very short in stature; also very slim, as were Cephas and Gilbert. George W. dressed nattily and invariably wore a beaver hat. He was rather pugnacious. He was a politician and at one time was postmaster. Luther G. Riggs, editor of the Recorder, took a great dislike to the whole family. In printing the name of George Washington he invariably used a small g and w. He always dubbed Nathaniel "gnat." Riggs had an office then in what now is the Silver City building. The Rogers brothers, or at least two of them, undertook to chastise Riggs. They waited all day long near the entrance to Riggs' office but the latter hearing that they had a horsewhip sent home for a revolver. At night he went home undisturbed. Soon afterwards Nathaniel Rogers went to Danbury. He was a manufacturer of silver novelties and reputed to be wealthy. Hervey

CEPHAS B. ROGERS.

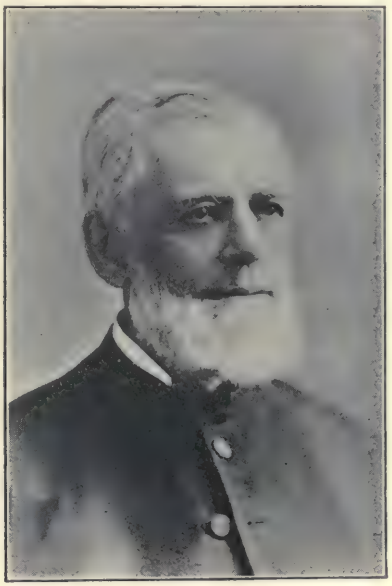
Rogers went to California during the "gold craze," about 1849. He was not heard of for years and had been given up for dead. Subsequently he returned and lived in Meriden until his death a while ago.

Cephas, Gilbert and Wilbur, under the name of C. Rogers & Brothers started in a small way to manufacture coffin hardware. They built up the big shops now known as Factory H of the International Silver Company. The Rogers Brothers Company was incorporated in the United States Silver Company engineered by the Thomas crowd of New York. This combination by devious ways obtained enough of the common and preferred stock of the International Silver Company to control the company. The common stock at this time had been a football, selling for a song, but in the hands of the stock jobbing crowd, it was held over the "heads" of the International as a club, to either surrender the management or buy out the crowd. At its inception I was invited to be one of the profiteers. My answer was "No," and further more I was a resident of Meriden and if I took such a mean advantage I would expect to be ridden out on a rail.

# MERIDEN MINISTERS.

**Other Interesting Items Regarding People I Know of That Fill a Whole Chapter.**

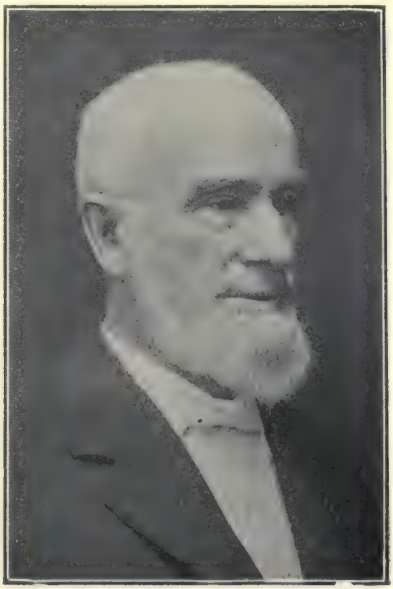
Ministers in Meriden have been a come and go lot. I only recall a few who stayed here to the end. Among the number was Rev. Giles H. Deshon, pastor of St. Andrew's



GILES H. DESHON

Episcopal church; Father Walsh of St. Rose's parish; Rev. "Father" Abraham Norwood of the Universalist church and Rev. Albert H. Hall, pastor at one time of the "Corner" Congregational church and at his death of the Center church uptown.

Rev. J. J. Wooley occupied the Center pulpit when I first went uptown to board. Rev. A. Barrelle was in



REV. JOSEPH J. WOOLEY.

charge of the Broad street Baptist; Rev. John Pegg, the Methodist; Rev. A. Steere, the Universalist; Rev. O. D. Walker, the Main street Baptist; Rev. Giles H. Deshon, the Episcopal and Father Walsh, St. Rose's.

Regularly every Saturday morning I called and was given by each the arrangement of service or text of the

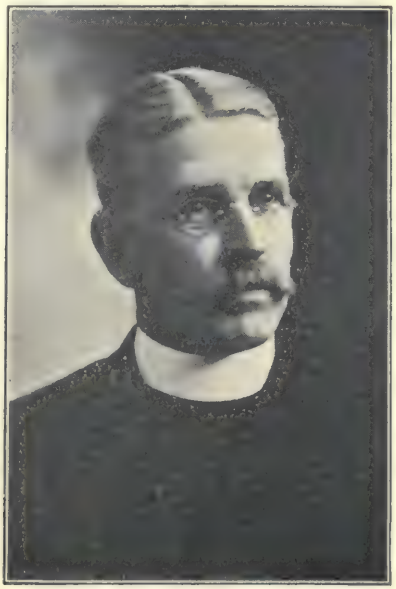
sermon for the following Sunday to be published in the Recorder.

At that time or a little later, Charles A. Greaber, who afterward turned doctor, was in charge of the German Lutheran church on Liberty street. Rev. A. T. Randall of St. Andrew's Episcopal is the dean of the ministers here today. Father A. Van Oppen of the French Catholic church on Camp street served thirty-five years. I should place of those living Rev. Albert J. Lord as hav-

Rev. A. VAN OPPEN

ing been here the third in number of years. St. Mary's Catholic, the South Meriden, St. Joseph's and the Polish and Italian Catholic churches; the Episcopal on West Main; the two German, one on Liberty and Twiss and

the one corner of Cook avenue and Hanover, have been established since. Meriden has been a stepping stone for these spiritual workers to get a "call" at a larger salary in some other thriving town. If I should recall those I have known who have come and gone it would include over fifty names. Of the whole lot Rev. W. H. H. Murray is the only one who left here that notably distinguished himself.



Rev. A. T. RANDALL

Back of the Congregational church was a row of horse sheds which were filled to overflowing on Sundays. The farmers with their families drove in from the surrounding territory, bringing small lunches consisting of cookies and sprigs of fennel and caraway seed. Dr. E. W.

Hatch, who was the first superintendent of the Reform School as it was then called, had a two-horse and a two or three seated wagon, driven by a colored man named Phil Butler, in which with his family were driven to the church steps punctually every Sunday morning. Then there were the numerous Butler and Yale families with but few descendents left. The superintendent of the Sun-

REV. ALBERT J. LORD.

day school was a man named Wm. A. Reed, who by his mismanagement years later, put the Miller Brothers Cutlery company in insolvency, the late Senator O. H. Platt being a heavy endorser, was financially embarrassed for years. Other sufferers were the two Miller brothers, William H. and George W.

The Congregational church and Meriden with its old puritanical notions was rudely and shockingly awakened about this time by the advent of Rev. W. H. H. Murray to its pastorate. O. H. Platt, who had come to Meriden from Washington, this state, had heard the gifted Murray preach in his native town, and so was instrumental in getting him invited to come to Meriden. "Parson" Murray preached eloquent sermons and became very popular, but his popularity was to be short lived. He was an ardent sportsman. He spent much time in the Adirondacks with a guide and he wrote entertainingly and interestingly of his fishing and shooting expeditons for the Literary Recorder at that time Meriden's only newspaper. This was a hard pill for his straight-laced parishioners to swallow, but the climax was reached when the "parson" bought a fast stepper and in sleighing time raced up and down Colony street. He was "called" to Boston, a call he accepted, which his congregation learned of with a sigh of relief. Murray was a man of great ability, but was too liberal in his views to be held down by an orthodox church. He became a great favorite in Boston, The people built him a temple to preach his own doctrine in. It was at the same time the renowned Henry Ward Beecher held forth in Brooklyn. Their sermons were features of the Monday morning newspapers in their respective cities. The careers of both were ruined by the love of women. Murray years later lectured in the same church in Meriden, which at this time had been turned into a theatre, on "John Norton's Christmas," the subject being an Adirondack guide. He started in to eulogize the late Luther G. Riggs, who had been publisher of the Literary Recorder and a warm friend of Murray. Riggs had left town after a stormy career. When Murray discovered his audience did not warm up for Riggs

he quickly comprehended the situation and wittingly qualified his remarks by saying "I care not whether his career has been up or down." Murray later went into the manufacture of "buckboards," failed in the proposition, and finally became an insurance agent. With all his up and downs, he always greeted me with hearty handshake and had a word of good cheer. He died in Guilford this state.

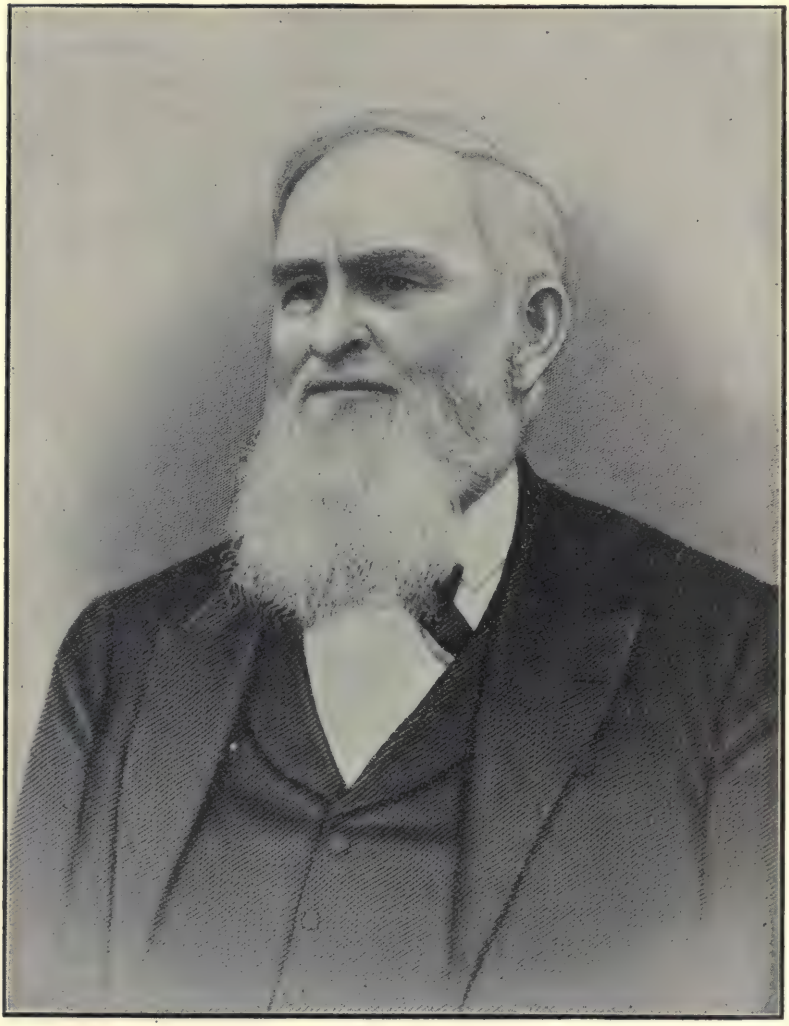
Mr. Riggs had a very retentive memory. He was in the civil war. After one of the severe battles, he was promoted to be captain. Before he was given his commission, there were several days of grace, when he was to be examined as to his fitness. He had never given any attention to army tactics, but in a couple of days, he had so mastered his book of instruction that he could recite any part of it. Upon another occasion, the late Robert G. Ingersoll lectured in Meriden on "The Mistakes of Moses." Riggs attended. That night after he returned to the office, he said, "You do not believe I can write Ingersoll's lecture out in full, do you?" I said no unless he had taken notes. He said he had not. He was a rapid writer, his permanship was not easy to read, but in a couple of hours he completed his work. I showed it to Mr. Ingersoll the next morning. He said he could not tell if it was his exact language, for he wrote out his lecture before he started out on his tour, committed it to memory, and was liable to change it from night to night. However, he said Mr. Riggs' report was as near as he could repeat it himself.

Mr. Riggs had a stormy time in Meriden. I could not count the number of attachments and criminal libel suits that were brought against him. His first trouble came about because he advocated that the first city reservoir be located in the West Mountain where it is now. Against

this proposition the late Charles Parker was determined that Black Pond should be the selection. Mr. Parker owned this property, and he saw a chance to get some easy money. Before this he and Riggs had been friends. Parker had induced Riggs to subscribe $200 toward the then new Methodist church, corner East Main and Pleasant street. Parker had patronized Riggs liberally with job printing. This he cut off, and had the church attach Riggs newspaper press for its $200. Riggs then printed poetry about the church around the corner, said Parker and his ring, mentioning many names, were trying to rob the city. The late Wilbur F. Parker undertook to chastise Riggs with a rawhide, which the latter took away from him. Wilbur was fined $25 and costs for assault. Riggs sued him for $10,000 for the attack. Charles Parker sued Riggs for libel as did the others in the alleged ring, some ten in all. Finally there was a compromise. Parker settled with those who had sued Riggs instead of any damages he might have to pay for assault. There was peace afterwards. Parker lived to be 96 years old and it is said that he never gave up hope of unloading Black Pond on the city.

Another story is told of Charles Parker. Of course, the Parker vise was one of the first put on the American market, and ever since has had a wide reputation. It is said the original was invented by one of his employes whom he agreed to give a royalty to for every one sold. The pattern was discarded and an infringement it is alleged was substituted so no royalty was ever paid.

In Parker's early manufacturing days, he paid his bills by giving notes, generally of several months duration. There were quite a number of these amounting to a considerably sum held in New York. There was a rumor circulated there that Parker was in a bad financial way.



HON. CHARLES PARKER.

It is said Mr. Parker did not deny it, but purchased them all at a liberal discount.

Newton P. Whittlesey, who lived on Britannia street, invented the first tin top for a fruit jar. His friend, the late W. W. Lyman furnished the money to pay for the patent, which was taken out in Lyman's name. He allowed Whittlesey to manufacture his own invention. Lyman took the profit, died rich. The inventer died poor.

# EARLY POLICE FORCE.

**Chief William N. Beach Narrowly Escaped Death by a Wethersfield Convict.**

The Meriden police force originally consisted of four men, the chief being Wm. M. Hagadon. He was succeeded in a short time by William N. Beach. There was quite a rivalry at this time as to who should be in charge. E. M. Pratt was a rival candidate. Subsequently Pratt was killed on the railroad track near the Lyon & Billard crossing. Beach was tall, large, powerfully built. He was a good officer.

An important capture he made was in arresting a fellow named Wilson with a pal who had broken into the old Bee Hive store in Hartford, now the Brown, Thomson & Co. The two thieves had stolen several bolts of fine silk. They drove to Meriden and put their horse and wagon in the shed of the late Eli Butler on North Colony street. It was discovered by Mr. Butler's hired man. Mr. Butler had it driven to the police station. Chief Beach suspected that the robbers would try to get away on the train. As soon as he reached the depot he saw two suspicious looking strangers, with large bundles. He gave chase and caught Wilson as he was trying to jump the fence below the Byxbee

block, the depot being on the west side of the track at that time.

Wilson was convicted and sent to Wethersfield for a long term. He was lame and walked with a cane, which he was allowed to use in prison. One day he sent for Chief Beach to come to see him as he had something to tell him. Beach did not go. It seemed Wilson was harboring a grudge, and while working in the shoe shop of the prison had secreted a sharp knife. A few days later he sent for Warden Willard. When the warden stood in front of his cell Wilson killed him by plunging the knife into his body, it having been attached to the end of his cane. Wilson was convicted of first degree murder. He boasted he would never be hung. He was confined in a cage, but in some unaccountable way he secured a piece of iron of which his cage was made and inserted it into his body so that it penetrated his intestines. It took a man of iron courage to inflict such an injury. When discovered he was very weak and it is said was in a dying condition when he was hung.

## AMUSEMENTS FIFTY YEARS AGO

Along in the 70's there was not much in the amusement line going on. There was Hemlock Grove, owned by "Uncle Jule" Andrews. He had a bowling alley and picnic grove. There was Eagle Cottage, where the Meriden Brewery now stands. It was owned by Norman Allen. He had built a house up in a tree. He was a genius and had a museum of mechanical toys. Under the trees in summer time he served ice cream and soft drinks.

There were one or two circuses each year, one ring

# HEMLOCK
# GROVE.

The above named Grove is open for visitors and for the accommodation of Excursion and Pic Nic Parties.

## "THAT OLD ARM CHAIR"

and each of the lesser ones is as inviting as ever. The

## COLD SPRING,

is situated in the Grove—the water gushes from the crevice of a large rock which it is suggested Moses smote when he watered the *Israelites* during their forty years wanderings, furnishes an abundance of the material which makes *Lemonade so good.*

## That "COMET" did not hit our "REVOLVER,"

We mean the Revolving Swing, and we are happy to inform our numerous friends that it is as good as new.

## THE BOWLING ALLEYS

have recently been put in "*tip top*" order as *all* who use them can testify.

## NATURES' HALL,

Our Pic Nic ground is capable of sheltering 10,000 persons under its leafy canopy. Any Religious Society, or Sabbath School, or any of the Public Schools in town can have the use of NATURES' HALL at any time when not otherwise engaged, free of charge.

"EVERY DAY BRINGS SOMETHING NEW".

## A DANCING BOARD

capable of accommodating the crowd, has been added to the other attractions of this famous resort. Parties wishing our Pic Nic ground or Dancing Board should make application in season to prevent disappointment.

**The O. B. B's will discourse sweet music if applied to in season.**

*Our Military Friends* are informed that we have a Target ground which defies competition as to location, shade &c.

*The Meriden Light Guards* are respectfully informed that it is at their service free of charge, at any time when not engaged. Pedlars will not be allowed on the grounds with their "traps" without a permit from the subscriber.

Meriden, June 1857. Our Motto—"First come first served." JULIUS ANDREWS.

Hamden's Power Press, West Meriden, Conn.

OLD TIME ATTRACTION.

affairs, with small menageries and an elephant. They were drawn from town to town by horses. Rain and mud seriously interfered with their transportation. One circus was showing up Pratt street way when Baldwins' dam gave way. The rushing water overcame some of the horses and they were drowned. Another time a big elephant went on the rampage. He tore up State street, putting his tusk through one horse and threw him up into the air. He was finally captured by a daring keeper who secured a rope around his leg, which was tied to a tree. Then other ropes were thrown over and around him. By aid of block and tackle he was pulled over on his side. He was clubbed and burned with hot irons. Finally he "whistled," which I am told is the elephant's signal of submission. This occurred in the orchard back of what are now the H. T. Smith barns. It took two or three days. The circus had gone on. I was told afterward the elephant only lived a short time after joining his company.

Once in a while Washburn's sensational troupe, conveyed by wagon, came to town and showed in the Town Hall. Uncle Tom's Cabin was one of the principal dramas and now and then a minstrel company. Lectures and concerts were quite common. Tom Thumb and wife and Commodore Nut and wife, the celebrated midgets, were also visitors.

Dancing was a popular pastime. The firemen generally held an annual celebration Thanksgiving eve each year. They were out in their gaudy uniforms, the red shirt being a conspicuous part. They were not tea parties, beer being sold openly and whisky in the back room. Most of the secret orders, such as the Masons, Odd Fellows and Knights of Pythias, held annual

events. The programmes were often elegant souvenirs which were preserved long after the event occurred. It was nearly all square dancing with a trained prompter. Emerson W. Rogers, a G. A. R. veteran, now in the Soldiers' Home at Noroton, was a general favorite.

When the present Congregational church was built Horace C. Wilcox bought the old building and turned it into a theater. It was moved from where Wilcox block now stands to the land back of where the Horton Printing Co. plant is located. It was under the management of Thomas and Ann Delavan. They were both unique characters. "Tom" finally left Ann. She managed it alone for several years. She had a masculine stride and dictating voice that many a man shuddered to encounter. There were a lot of superstitions expressed when it was learned that the church edifice was to be given over to such "ungodly" service as a theater. Some ascribed its non-success to that fact. However, since the new Poli theater has not fared much better, the fact of transferring a church into a theater could not have been much of a factor in the show game.

## WHERE SPORTING ELEMENT CONGREGATED

The Byxbee House was the principal rendezvous for the sporting element to congregate. The silver industry was in its most prosperous days. Many employes made big money. They were paid once a month, generally on the 15th. Old-fashioned mixed drinks were very common and the prices would do justice to the scarcity of booze to-day. Everything was generally put on the "slate" until the monthly pay day when the individual amounts went often over three figures. I do

not know of one of the high rollers of those days now living. There was a sign on the railroad side which announced all trains stopped five minutes.

## HAIR TURNED WHITE IN NIGHT

There were two saloons on State street, one called the "Boat" and one the "Ship." About 1875 John Somers bought one of these dives. There was a murder there one night. John was not a principal, but he was so badly scared his hair turned white in a night. He was a painter originally. He dropped the rum business and became a partner in the Little, Somers & Hyatt Company. He died a few years ago. I only recall one saloon on East Main street, between State and Pratt, kept by Sidney Brainerd.

## VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

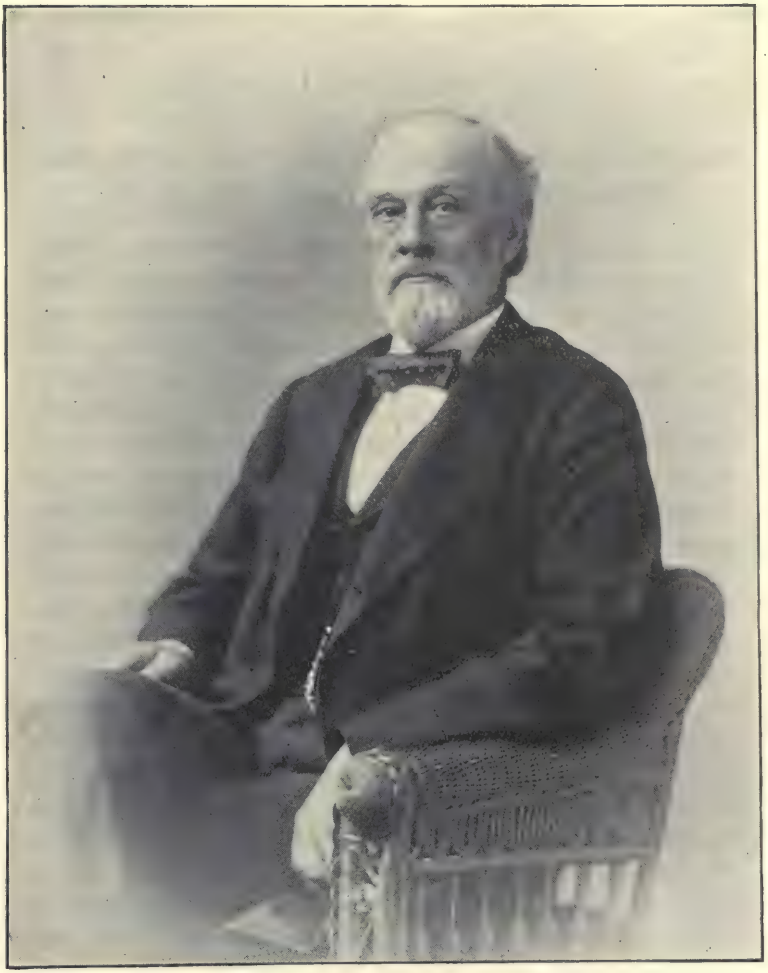
The old fire department was a volunteer one. The leading men in town were members, among whom was the late John C. Byxbee. The fire fighting facilities were two hand pump machines and a limited amount of hose. I think these old "tubs" are still stored in Meriden. There was a demand for a paid department, but the authorities were slow in adopting it. There was a strong suspicion that a number of incendiary fires that occurred about this time were set to hurry things along. The reorganized department since has had a good record. There have been few large fires, attended by heavy losses. In fact in many instances if the firemen had the best interests of Meriden at heart when such old shacks as the disgraceful one at the corner of State and Main streets did get ablaze they would have

seen to it that something was out of order and could not have been put in shape until it was too late. This shack has been on fire several times and as many opportunities were lost to get rid of it. Likewise the one next to it owned by John McMahon. The notable fires that have occurred in Meriden could be counted upon the fingers of one hand. Probably the conflagration in the upper story of the Britannia shop in 1871; the horse car barns and the old Town Hall were the only ones resulting in any considerable loss. There were many of the old buildings near the "Corner" burned at one time or another, but they were not of a substantial nature. The old Byxbee hotel went down about 1869 and smoldered for several days, but it was immediately rebuilt. The insurance companies must have reaped a harvest from the amount received in all these years against the sum paid for losses. In the heart of Meriden there are only four fire-proof structures and they were all built under my ownership or supervision.

# OLD POLITICAL DAYS.

**Both Parties Had Stirring Leaders, Such as the Late Senator O. H. Platt and Sheriff J. C. Byxbee.**

Elections in Meriden are tame affairs nowadays. The recent city election where the papers printed the contentions of the rival candidates lacked the snap, fun and tact of the good old times before the secret ballot. I remember then the hot contests that were waged. Like "love and war," anything one party could put over the other was conceded to the one having the highest number of votes, without question as to how it was accomplished. The commanding figures were John C. Byxbee and Orville H. Platt. Both were at least six feet tall and spare in build. Byxbee represented the Democrats and later was rewarded with the office of sheriff and U. S. revenue collector. Platt besides holding many minor offices was elected U. S. senator. Both filled their respective offices with zeal and ability, having in mind always the best welfare of the public. Yet if the tactics they pursued were in vogue to-day the leaders of both parties would be in jail. W. D. Parker, the present assistant to the board of assessors, was a clerk for E. D. Castelow, who was first selectman in 1876. He can tell you that neither side had any scruples about substituting some one for every name of a deceased voter which had been kept on the list for the purpose, the registrar knowing the party to be dead.



HON. ORVILLE H. PLATT.

## BALLOTS LOOKED LIKE HAND BILLS

Then there were the counterfeiting of the ballots, perhaps with the change of one or two names, and the giving out to voters as genuine. To counteract this the type used was of different faces and sizes and resembled a displayed handbill. Other times the managers would not print the ballots until midnight, a few hours before the polls opened. One particular night E. D. Castelow, Dr. Fitch and some others undertook this arrangement. The printers, including myself, had set the type and had the ballots ready for printing, the time being 2 o'clock a. m., when we informed the committee that before we printed a single ballot we must be provided with a lunch. Harry Bloxham, the senior, kept the old Meriden club house. Harry was "wakened." He soon provided sandwiches and coffee. However, instead of sending them to the Recorder office where we were waiting for them the porter by mistake took them to the Republican office, the printers of which like ourselves were printing the opposition ticket. The aroma of the coffee and the sight of the sandwiches was alluring. They immediately "washed up," and just as they were about to seat themselves for a "treat" the porter returned and said he had made a mistake. The joke was a sad reality to me for two of our men were taken with acute indigestion from eating hastily, and though were later relieved by Dr. Fitch, were unable to do any more work that night, and I had three men's work to do instead of one

## BOSSES WATCHED BALLOT BOXES

The Republicans had the upper hands in those days as a rule. The owners of the shops, superintendents

and foremen nearly all belonged to the G. O. P. On election day they were often found standing near the ballot box as a menace to the employe to vote straight. Even with this great handicap the Democrats sometimes outwitted their opponents. Linus Birdsey was an old war-horse Democrat. He was county commissioner at one time, later postmaster uptown, besides holding many minor offices. "Uncle" Linus prided himself that he never scratched a ticket. The newspapers were not generally neutral, but supported their favorites with vigor.

## CAREER OF WILLIAM F. GRAHAM

William F. Graham was publisher of the Republican. He was a party man strictly, except sometimes when he wanted a note endorsed he disclosed enough of confidential political knowledge to his victim so that he came across without it being necessary to resort to open blackmail. When Phineas Lounsbury was running for governor Mr. Graham was his ardent supporter. One day he stepped into Mr. Lounsbury's bank in New York, drew a check for $2,500. The cashier told Graham he could not honor it as he did not know him. Graham replied Mr. Lounsbury did. Mr. Lounsbury obligingly put his O. K. on it, and remorsefully had to refund the money to the bank when it was returned from Meriden marked "No funds."

Graham, while unscrupulous as to how he obtained money, was a shrewd reader of character. For instance, when he wanted to "touch" a man like the late I. C. Lewis he was a strong temperance advocate, and extolled his goodness and liberality. Mr. Lewis on one occasion paid Graham and his wife's expenses to

Europe and shortly before Graham died sent him to Colorado to recover his health. Graham raised thousands of dollars upon one plea or another. In the 70's he stood out strongly for the manufacturers when wages were being lowered, telling the workmen of Meriden how much better off they were even with the

HON. JOHN C. BYXBEE
One time Sheriff and Internal Revenue Collector.

reduction than others were in nearby cities. The manufacturers fell for Graham's support, endorsed his notes, paid them, at first charged them off, but later capitalized the amount in the stock of the Republican Publishing Company. The Republican carried a motto

EX-GOVERNOR ABIRAM CHAMBERLAIN.

on the top of its first page—"With Charity for all. With malice toward none." A disgruntled employe changed it to "With charity for none. With malice toward all."

## HONORS BESTOWED ON MERIDENITES

Meriden has had its share of political honors. Foremost was the Hon. Orville H. Platt who was United

JAMES J. WALSH.
Internal Revenue Collector.

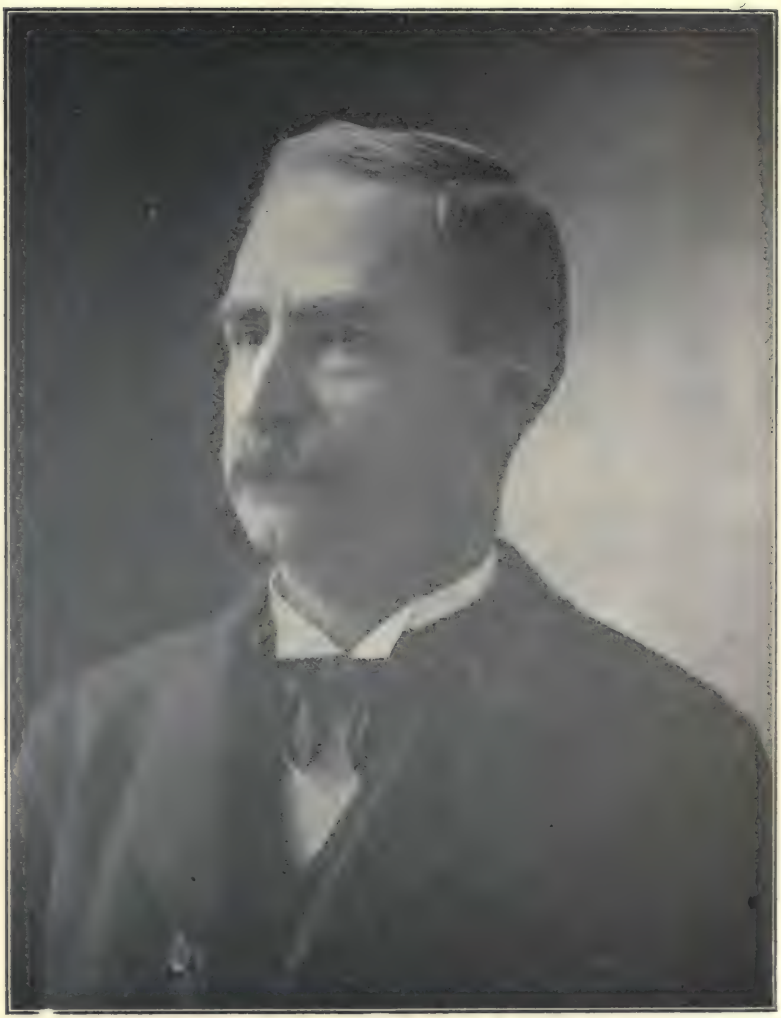
States senator for several terms, who died in office, as did his son, James P. Platt, who for many years was United States circuit judge. Hon. Abiram Chamberlain was governor of the state. John C. Byxbee, besides be-

HON. THOMAS L. REILLY.
Mayor, Congressman and Sheriff.

ing sheriff of New Haven county, was U. S. internal revenue collector, as was James J. Walsh. Thomas L. Reilly was representative to Congress two different terms and is now sheriff of New Haven county. Several have been doorkeepers in the Senate and House at Washington and likewise in the legislature at Hartford. In local politics as an office holder George W. Miller is the dean. He was first selectman in 1882 and with one or two exceptions was elected for a period of nearly forty years. Herman Hess as town and city clerk comes next. In clerkships in political office W. D. Parker was clerk for the selectmen in 1876, was in the state labor bureau for years and is now in the assessor's office. He is an encyclopedia of state political information.

## MERIDEN HAD A FORMER DRY PERIOD

About 1876 there was a great temperance movement in Meriden. Rev. Wm. H. Boole, who was pastor of the Methodist church, was its leader. He placarded the town with the words, "Kill That Snake." Two advocates, Frost and McKelvey, talked to crowded audiences at the Town Hall. Quite a number took the pledge, and the town voted itself "dry." Of course no license money was paid into the local treasury, but whisky could be had just the same. The lawyers reaped a rich harvest in prosecuting and defending the sellers. At the end of the year with the loss of revenue and the heavy costs of prosecution the taxpayers sat up and took notice. License was voted at the next election and Meriden was "wet" until the Volstead act. There has seldom been a time when "booze" could not be obtained in the town after closing hours, Sundays and holidays. One drug store on Main street served it from



GEORGE W. MILLER.
Held Office Until 83 Years Old.

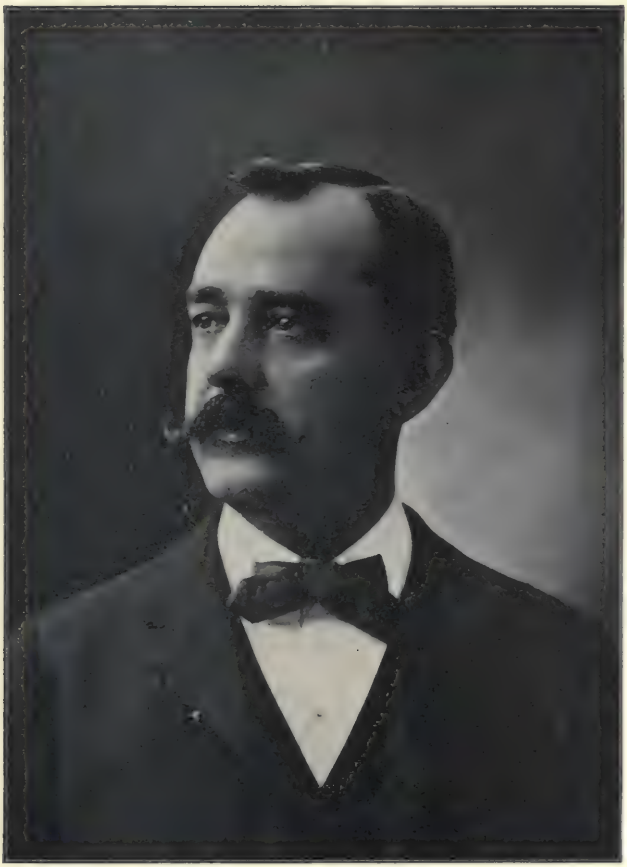
its soda fountain after the prescribed hours at night and Sundays for several years. Knowing ones could get a "smile" from an obliging member of the police force when police headquarters were in the old Rogers block, cigars likewise. If a certain old closet could talk it could tell you of several demijons of good old rye and boxes of cigars that were donated to the man in authority, probably in exchange for a quiet tip if a raid were contemplated.

## GAMBLING AND BOOZE SELLING

Meriden very seldom has been without a gambling den or a booze joint doing business illegitimately. The slot machines were in evidence for years. They would be put in the back room for a time if a raid was threatened, only to be trotted out a few days later. With the changing over of the Meriden House and the burning down of the Polish hall on Vine street two of the most notorious after hours places have gone for good. "Dave" Hayes kept "open house" on West Main street, defied the authorities for years, but finally was broken up. At least two mayors were cognizant of some of these rank violations of law but for political reasons "winked" at their continuance.

## SHOULD BE SELECTMAN EMERITUS

George W. Miller, who should have been selectman emeritus and then some, came to Meriden during the Civil war as a gun maker, working at the Parker Brothers gun shop. Then with his brother, William H., he formed the Miller Brothers Cutlery Company and staid with it until it became financially embarassed. Afterwards he had a shop of his own on George street where



HERMAN HESS.
Town and City Clerk 36 Years.

he manufactured pocket knives. One time when he slipped up being selectman he put in a machinery shoe repairing plant on West Main street. George has a peculiar habit, all his own, of wrapping his arms around his body when he is engrossed in talking. I believe he has done it so much that his fingers can touch in the middle of his back.

## OFFICE HOLDER OF LONG RECORD

Herman Hess and I lived in the same house on Gold street during our early career. I had organized the Journal Publishing Company in the spring of 1886, and at the October election Herman became town clerk. He had been bookkeeper at the Malleable Iron Company; before that sold tickets for the Consolidated Road, and when a lad was cash boy in Babb's dry goods store, located at Palace block. He is an out and out Meriden product. My pen and support are always at Herman's command. We have been fast friends all these years, and knowing his capabilities it is a pleasure for me to endorse him.

# CAREER AS A JOURNALIST.

## The Meriden Daily Journal Only One of Many the Writer Founded and Was Interested In.

It might be interesting to note that I started my first newspaper venture in Wallingford, Conn., with the high-sounding title of "Windemere Weekly Forum." I did all the work as editor, compositor, pressman, bookkeeper, and manager. After a year I started out for more experience, which I met in various towns and cities, even to the Pacific Coast. In 1884 I returned to Meriden and published a Sunday paper for awhile. Then ventured forth with a daily paper, but for only a short time, when I was attacked by my old malady—hemorrhage. There was no alternative but to keep quiet for awhile. In the spring of 1886 the Journal Publishing Company was started, and with it commenced the Meriden Daily Journal.

Then a period of twelve years later, when I was in charge of the Red Cross in Havana, I saw the opportunity of publishing the first American daily newspaper in that Cuban city, and with it a job printing plant which did a good share of the government printing. As its editor, the period being immediately after the Spanish American war, I made the accquaintance of nearly all the old line army officers, among the number being General Tasker H. Bliss, General Hugh L. Scott, General Leonard Wood, Generals Brooke, Wilson Chaffee and Ludlow.

The late United States Senator O. H. Platt, author of the Platt amendment to the Cuban Constitution, sought my advice frequently as to conditions in that country and the remedy.

The Havana Post was the name of the paper. In December, 1921, I visited its office, learned that it had just been purchased for $150,000, and that it had been a continued success since I sold it in 1900.

After this venture, I bought the New Britain Daily News, a morning newspaper, but soon sold it. However during this period it supported the nomination for governor of Hon. George P. McClean, now and for several terms previous United States senator.

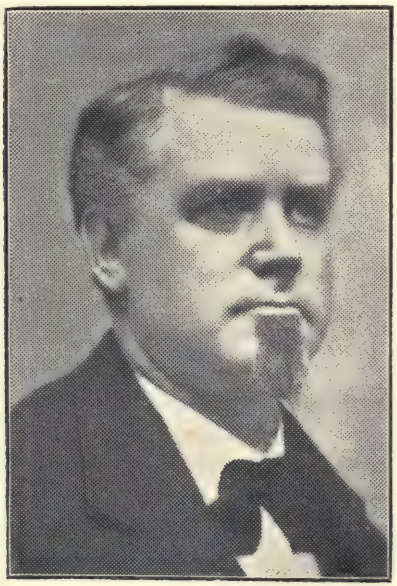
## COMBATTED NEFARIOUS WATERBURY OFFER.

Then I purchased the Waterbury Daily Republican, a morning newspaper, which I published for seven months, when I sold for a handsome sum. I took a mortgage for $20,000, upon its plant and good will. More than a year afterward I was invited to meet some of Waterbury's leading citizens, one of whom was the late Henry Peck. I was asked if I knew that my mortgage was not worth the paper it was written upon. These people said they had been asked to put some money in the enterprise, but first wanted to clear off the mortgage. It was not their fault that the instrument was defective, but rather than have me lose the whole $20,000, they would generously give me $5,000. I replied that they must have an enlargement of the heart, that they could go as far as they liked, but if they believed they could cheat me out of what was due me and succeeded, I would start an opposition paper in Waterbury and publish their nefarious offer

on the front page every issue. Suffice to say, the matter was never again referred to.

## LEARNED TRADE UNDER L. G. RIGGS.

I might say I learned the printer's trade under the tuition of the late Luther G. Riggs, who published the Meriden Literary Recorder.



LUTHER G. RIGGS.
Famous Old-Time Meriden Newspaper Man.

I commenced my apprenticeship when eleven and one-half years old. One day while putting together the parts of an old printing press Mr. Riggs, after watching me a

few minutes, remarked, "Well, boy, what are you trying to do?"

"I am putting this press together because you know when I am as old as you I shall publish a newspaper too."

In turning away Mr. Riggs laughingly remarked, "I know you will, and you will make a success of it."

Experience in intervening years in towns and cities from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast as printer, pressman, reporter, editor, manager and organizer of newspapers, proved valuable, when in company with F. E. Sands, T. L. Reilly and the late Lew Allen, The Journal Publishing Company was formed. My associates previously had been newspaper writers. They, too, were equipped with valuable experience, which combined with the all-round newspaper work I had performed in various fields, put The Journal on a foundation of immediate success.

## THE JOURNAL PUBLISHING COMPANY.

For twenty-five years this quartet worked together, Mr Allen retiring on account of ill-health and Mr. Reilly to to accept the position of Congressman. The writer retired two years later, leaving Mr. Sands, the youngest of the original owners, to continue the business.

It had been the policy of The Journal from the start never to feature its owners or employes, but to build up a strong organization, so that the coming or going of those who should contribute to its success, would in no wise mar its standard of being one of the leading newspapers of the state.

These original owners having retired, it has given me great pleasure to know that this policy so early adopted was a wise one, for The Journal, always progressive, is still striving to furnish Meriden a newspaper that it may

ORIGINAL JOURNAL QUARTET.
F. E. Sands, Lew Allen, T. L. Reilly, Francis Atwater.

well be proud of. In its thirty-five years there has been no public improvement in this vicinity it has not advocated and in many, by its very persistence, has accomplished.

I might mention some of these as the hospital, Cold Spring Home, the public library, the High School, the Meriden, Southington & Lake Compounce Electric railroad, the board of trade, the armory, the centennial celebration, hundreds of charitable benefits, good streets, the white way, additional reservoirs, and other things too numerous to mention.

## INTRODUCED FIREPROOF BUILDINGS.

It built both the first and second fireproof buildings in Meriden, in both instances tearing down old shacks that disgraced the city, to replace them with modern structures.

The Journal has chronicled the daily happenings of Meriden and no more faithful portrayal of local history can be found than is contained in the bound volumes of its first and every issue since, now reposing in the public library. Besides all this it published the comprehensive history of the town's existence written by the late George M. Curtis, also the Centennial History compiled by the writer, all of this material combined making an unsurpassed story of the doings of the town.

The Journal's age there can be no dispute about. I do not know as this is a particular asset, but the Record which commenced publication October 8, 1892, many years later, says on its front page, it was established in 1860. Why its publishers insist on this date they may possibly be able to tell, I cannot. There is no connecting link between The Record and any newspaper published

in 1860, not even the ghost of one. In fact, the only successor to the 1860 publication was the Literary Recorder, and The Journal can truthfully say if the old Recorder had a successor it must be it, as it succeeded to its outfit, some of which is still in existence in its job office, while I graduated from it as a newspaper man.

The Journal has had two rival publications in the evening field, in fact one, the Republican, was in existence when it started, but the survival of the fittest applied and for years it has had no competitor. Meriden can support a morning and an evening newspaper, but the high cost of daily publication today would make a third venture an impossible burden to the city.

Of the employes of The Journal, while many have been connected with it for twenty or more years there are none on the payroll who were there when it was first issued. Mr. Sands is the sole survivor of that day now in the office.

"There's Room at the Top" was the title of a poem written by Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, the celebrated poetess, which headed the editorial columns of the first issue of The Journal. Mrs. Wilcox then resided in Meriden. She appreciated the newspaper conditions of those days and was inspired to write those pertinent words. That The Journal has fulfilled her predictions needs no qualifying words.

## SOME JOURNAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

The Journal was the first newspaper in Connecticut to stop the practice of taking local subscriptions. The enforcement of this rule was a disturbing factor in the quartet of owners, because the writer was the only one who had confidence it could be carried out. In the old

days the newspaper office took subscriptions, hired boys to deliver by routes, had bookkeepers to enter and bill the quarterly charges, also collectors to bring in the returns, which were so meagre for the expenses incurred that it was absolutely discouraging when pay day came to meet the pay roll. If payment was pressed the subscriber became irritated and generally cancelled his subscription. The cutting off of all subscribers and turning the routes over to boys to collect by the week or as they might arrange, brought some dark days before the problem was solved, but when the boys discovered they were their own merchants and could make double the amount they did working for the office the circulation bounded up in a few short weeks to far more than it had been under the old plan. The boys now paid for their papers each night for the number desired, bookkeepers and collectors were eliminated, as were also thousands of dollars in dead-head accounts.

The Journal was the second newspaper in Connecticut to adopt the web-perfected press with its stereotyping outfit, the first being the Bridgeport Post, Hartford and New Haven papers followed two or three years later. It has kept pace also with the different typesetting machines made by the Mergenthaler Linotype company, especially with the two and four deck magazine machines, the two-decker practically having been perfected here. It was also the first to adopt the electric governed drying machine for making matrix pages, while its job room and bookbindery have always led in up-to-date machinery.

## JOURNAL A BROAD SCHOOL.

The Journal office has been a broad school. From it have graduated a congressman, internal revenue collector state senator, several postmasters, aldermen, superinten-

dents of large printing establishments, editors, reporters, lawyers, printers, pressmen, stereotypers and from the ranks of its thousands of newsboys you will find a bright business man or professional man in nearly every city in the United States. On one occasion in New York, after purchasing a large invoice of goods, I was asked to give reference as to my responsibility, when a young man stepped forward and said, "Say, boss, Mr. Atwater is all right. I know him. I used to sell his newspapers." Nearly every energetic young business man in Meriden has at one time or another sold The Journal, and no doubt thousands of dollars in the local savings banks were deposited by thrifty newsboys.

In conclusion I may add the twenty-seven years I was associated with The Journal were full of interest and romance, the memory of which will be cherished to the end. When I voluntarily retired from its leadership I believe I had given it all I could and in the meantime had endeavored to the best of my ability to upbuild Meriden in every conceivable way. While Meriden did a great deal toward my success, I in turn gave the best years of my life to improve its general conditions.

## PROGRESSIVE WORK OF F. E. SANDS.

Of one of my partners, F. E. Sands, I wish to say in all of our association, while in the company and since, we never uttered an unkind word. We did not always agree as to the best policy, but the difficulty was generally overcome in a give-and-take spirit. Mr. Sands is very orderly, as well as systematic, in his work. In the many details that were occasioned by the Centennial celebration, he had them all well in hand. It was a work of patience and time. In everything that pertains for Meri-

den's good, Mr. Sands is always in the front rank. The Journal directors' room was the scene of many meetings that brought results that the public were not aware where they originated.

Mr. Sands was one of the managers of the Home Club, director in the Chamber of Commerce, managed the Country Club for years, became a major in the Home

FRANK E. SANDS.

Guards during the war, was active in all war measures, and has given a great deal of time in building the new hospital. He has been a force in the community for good. He has been the publicity man of every good measure for Meriden. His community as a rule does not recognize

that he is publishing a newspaper that many cities of three times the population would be proud of.

## SEEKS CALIFORNIA FOR HEALTH.

In December, 1881, while living in Meriden, I was taken with a violent hemorrhage. My doctor advised going to California. Not knowing whether I would ever return, I bid my wife and small boy a sad farewell. I arrived there the following January, and settled in Red Bluff. I stayed there one year. In the meantime the proprietor of the paper of which I was editor was killed. The murderer was defended by Gen. N. P. Chipman, who was Judge Advocate of the court martial of Wirz, the infamous keeper of the Andersonville rebel prison, and years afterwards U. S. Circuit Judge. Subsequently we had occasion to have some correspondence of which the following is self-explanatory:

Aug. 11, 1911.

General N. P. Chipman, Sacramento, Cal.

My Dear General—Your favor at hand. In recalling the Townsend-Montgomery murder I do not know if the true facts were brought out or not and perhaps you do not know I was the innocent instigator. Townsend came into my life like an inspiration. I had gone to California threatened with consumption. One Sunday morning I had a very bad hemorrhage. It was in one of the old hotels in San Francisco. It was a blue day. I stood before the bar with a glassful of whiskey, when Townsend slapped me on my shoulder and insisted I should join him in a drink. It was our introduction, and in one hour we had become so well acquainted that I agreed to go to Red Bluff to become the editor of The Sentinel.

I had no accquaintance with Montgomery. However, I did write the article which led Montgomery to print two columns of abuse of Townsend. I retorted the next day in a sarcastic vein. The day before the murder I went from the Main street to our office on a side street, Townsend following 300 feet behind. When he finally overtook me he asked if I saw Montgomery. I said no. Townsend said, "Why he was on the opposite side of the street and I would give $10 if I had a picture of him sneaking along."

Now the original article had no relation to Montgomery It was an item about a rag doll given to an old maid in a boarding house. It was thrown out of the window. Early next morning it was picked up by a man who intended to put it on the doorstep of a widow, but when in front of the Sentinel office he heard the whistle of his train and the doll was left at our office door. Montgomery fitted this into his early life and tried to make out I was twitting him of being a bastard although until his trial I never heard of his antecendents. Nevertheless, the fatality followed. Townsend may have had his faults but in a wide experience I have yet to meet the man who had as big a heart.

Now, let me tell you the sequel of my settling the Townsend estate. He was killed in June. I straightened out his tangled affairs and left Red Bluff the next January. I never heard anything from there as the years rolled on until I met you on the Union Pacific train going west, which you may recall. When at the Portland fair, twenty-two years after the tragedy, I decided in passing through Red Bluff to stop off. I found some of my old friends notably Mr. Ellison who had become a judge of the superior court, and Mr. Calhoun, president of the bank.

## COINCIDENCE OF A LIFE TIME.

Then I went to the old Townsend homestead. I rapped at the door. It was opened by a young lady who I immediately recognized as a grandchild. I asked for her mother, Mrs. Chard. She came to the door but did not recognize me. I said, "Don't you remember Mr. Atwater?"

"Why, then you received my letter," she said.

I replied, "No, I never received a letter from Red Bluff since I left here."

"Then what brought you here?"

"I simply stopped off to see the town. Why, did you write to me?"

"Yes, I am in a lot of trouble, and knowing how well you handled my father's affairs I sent to you to help me."

"When was this?"

"I registered a letter to you ten days ago."

"Why, I left the east before it could have reached me."

This is the most remarkable coincidence of my life, but minor ones, like the one which brings us together in connection with Red Bluff I could write pages. Perhaps sometime I may compile a volume entitled "The Romance and Tragedy of Red Bluff."

Yours truly,

Francis Atwater.

Red Bluff in those days had not yet recovered from the rough, uncouth ways of the early times in California. There was a gang of desparadoes when I went there who had been arrested for setting fire to the court house. They were discharged for lack of evidence. They did not like the way I had written them up. They threatened my life. Friends gave me two revolvers and a shot gun. The latter always stood by my desk, provided with four

balls, if I should not shoot straight which might scatter. My revolver always lay upon my desk for emergency, while another remained in my pocket. Subsequently I was much relieved when all but one were convicted for various dismeanors and were sent to states prison for periods of from ten to fifteen years.

# TWO CENTENNIALS.

**One of His Native Town and Other Celebration of His Adopted Residence, Meriden.**

In 1895 the Centennial of the incorporation of my native town was celebrated. Upon its conception I was conferred with. It was proposed I should write a souvenir history of the development of the past one hundred years. Although having many other things to do, I undertook the work, most of which was accomplished between midnight and four o'clock in the morning. Enough volumes were donated and sold so that the sum realized nearly covered the expenses of the occasion. Of the author these preparatory words were written by the late Rev. Leverett Stearns Griggs, who had been a prominent Congregational clergyman in the town:

"This book is hereby taken possession of for the insertion of a few Prefatory Words, to be spoken, independently of him whose production it is, to you whom it cordially greets, as, honoring with your attention, you are now about to turn its pages, and aided by the illustrations which embellish it, peruse with more or less care its record of the people and the times that have been in this ancient town.

"When residents of Plymouth made known their purpose to observe with appropriate celebration, upon May 14 and 15, 1895, the first centennial of the setting off of the town, among many to whom this intelligence was of great interest was one, who, born and reared till the

period of youth in the town, had then gone elsewhere, an orphan boy, to seek, or rather under God to make his fortune, and after varied experience in the remote West as well as in the East had at length won his way to become the head of a leading publishing house located in one of the cities of Connecticut. Cherishing with fond and grateful affection the memories of his early years he recognized in the projected celebration an opportunity of rendering a tribute of filial regard to his native town. Hardly had the wish sprung up within him, akin to that which "heaved the breast" of the peasant poet of Scotland,

"That, I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some usefu' plan or book could make,"

before it matured into the purpose, which at length materialized in the result of a Souvenir History of Plymouth, a quarto volume of ninety-one pages, which appeared fresh from the press on the day of the Centennial celebration, and was one of the most beautiful and pleasing features of that memorable occasion. It was accepted in advance as the only authorized publication of the sort in connection with the day; and a thousand copies were donated to the town to aid in defraying the expenses incidental to the celebration. But the compiler having collected much valuable information beyond what entered into the Souvenir History in its original form, could not be content with so limited a publication; neither was he willing that a work which of necessity had been hurriedly produced, with unavoidable errors detracting from its value, should be the finality of his endeavers to hand on to the future a volume which should be at once a contribution to the history of his native town, and a memorial of the first centennial celebration of its organization. It was in his purpose also that the book in its ultimate scope

should include a full account of the centenary. Accordingly he regarded the volume issued at that time as a provisional publication preparatory to one more complete and accurate which should follow it at the earliest practicable date. Hence this book. It is the tribute of a son of Plymouth to his civic mother upon the hundredth anniversary of her life.

"The production of it has been a labor of love and has involved months of unwearied effort including many journeys and a large expenditure of means, not indeed without hope of pecuniary return, but with a generous purpose unrestricted by considerations of personal gain. It has not been the product of one hand alone, but while many collaborators have contributed to it, the casting of the whole, and much of the composition of it, have been the work of him with whom the design of the book had its origin. As it now goes forth in its concluding form, that were an unworthy omission which should leave unspoken any mention of the public spirit, the *amor patriae* which has had expression in the production of this volume as tender and true as was manifested by those other sons of Plymouth who wore the blue in the war for the Union. And so upon this opening page his appreciative townsmen and friends inscribe the name of Francis Atwater, with grateful acknowledgement of the honorable and amiable spirit manifested by him in giving being to this memorial."

## THE CENTENNIAL OF MERIDEN.

Twelve years later the centennial of the setting off of the town of Meriden took place. Having had this previous experience, I suggested more than two years before the event that an organization be perfected. My advice was taken and an executive committee of fifteen was se-

lected. Many could not see the wisdom of organizing so far ahead, but it proved none to early. One reason was that many annual gatherings were to be invited to participate. Of course this required action at meetings a year or more before the centennial was to take place. Another thing was to have the biennial legislature give the committee power to take possession of certain streets for the week's celebration so that there would not be individual liability. Then, too, if a history was prepared, the time should not be too limited. Subscriptions were to be solicited to cover or rather guarantee the expenses. The town also was expected to appropriate part of the money for the purpose.

The history was undertaken by the late George M. Curtis and its publication by the Journal Publishing Company, of which I was president, a certain per cent of the sales to go to the centennial treasurer. The Journal also was authorized to issue an official program. The two publications netted several thousands of dollars for the treasury. The writer was corresponding secretary and given a paid assistant to attend to the necessary details.

There were various committees appointed, the membership amounting to hundreds. All classes and nationalities were represented. When the week's celebration closed, it had proven more successful than could possibly have been anticipated. It proved that a period of more than two years was none too long to cover the work there was to be done.

After the close of the event, I compiled the proceedings of the week, put in book form, every detail being preserved. Probably no town was ever covered more thoroughly from a historical standpoint than this town in its "Centennial History of Meriden" and the "Proceedings of the Centennial."

# PROMOTER OF BANKS.

**Vicissitudes and Experience in Organization with Sketches of Meriden's Leading Bankers.**

As related, elsewhere I promised to start a new bank when my partner and I were refused the loan of a single dollar by the old banks to build the Meiden, Southington and Compounce Tramway Company, although we were compelled to borrow over $200,000 to complete the first nine miles. When I was state senator I procured the charter for the Puritan Trust Company. I renewed its powers which expired in two years in 1909 and again in 1911. In 1912 subsciptions were sought for $50,000 capital and the amount pledged the following September. Up to this time I had kept the charter alive, and paid the organization expenses; beside, those who could not pay for their stock, I loaned them the amount due. There were over 200 subscribers. Some of the leaders called a secret meeting of which I was not informed and made up a slate of officers and directors, naming me as executive chairman, instead of president. The former position carried the most power, but the way it was brought about was cowardly and lacked any display of appreciation of the work I had performed. I did not have to accept the condition, as I had not yet assigned the charter to the subscribers, but for the sake of harmony overlooked what I considered a freak of meanness.

The first choice of a president and three successive treasurers were unfortunate. These mistakes have been corrected and the bank to-day is in a flourishing condition. The deposits have passed the million mark and the surplus is half as much as the capital. Of its savings deposits more than half are loaned on real estate in Meriden. I owned the building it was located in, and charged a nominal rental. Its success now being established, it has purchased the property, and plans have been drawn for an up-to-date banking house. When I retired from active business, I resigned my position as chairman and director.

This was the first new bank established in forty-five years. The town had been growing all this time, but its banking facilities instead of keeping pace, had actually decreased, the capital stock having been reduced $200,000 or $300,000. The surplus of the several banks today about equals the amount of the capital stock before reduction.

## OTHER BANK AND TRUST COMPANIES.

After taking up my residence in New Haven, I took an active interest in organizing the Broadway Bank and Trust Company, and the American Bank and Trust Company, later becoming a director in each, and the temporary president of the latter organization. Subsequently I became interested and organized the East Hampton Bank and Trust Company, the Wallingford Trust Company and the Torrington Trust Company. These banks have combined deposits of over $7,000,000. They are the result of the banking institutions of Meriden refusing to loan money for an electric road which has brought hundreds of thousands of dollars in trade to Meriden. It was a short-sighted policy. In fact, the town has been held back by its banks because first, for years its savings

CHARLES L. ROCKWELL.

banks invested five dollars in bonds for every one it loaned on real estate; by reducing its capital stock, and by the First National Bank investing nearly all of the amount of its deposits in outside securities, instead of developing local business. If it had not been for its successful building and loan institutions, Meriden would have its erection of houses curtailed to a minimum. I am glad to have lived to see the banks pursue a more liberal policy, but for fifty years they could have been called ultra-conservative.

## CHARLES L. ROCKWELL.

The financial figure of Meriden is Charles L. Rockwell. Like John L. Billard and C. F. Linsley in their respective lines, he is so wedded to the banking game that there probably is no jumping off place as long as breath lasts. He is the practical head of the First National Bank the Meriden Trust Company and the City Savings Bank. Unlike the Home and the Meriden National Banks, which use their deposits as far as practical in local discounts, Mr. Rockwell has pursued an opposite policy, and I believe the First National Bank has the distinction of being the only one in the country whose investment in bonds and stocks equal the amount of deposits. From a local standpoint, this is not a popular feature, but perhaps from a profitable view it works out alright, as the First National stock generally stands the highest in the State, according to quotations. Probably there is no better posted man in town regarding finances. One of Mr. Rockwell's stock sentences, when telling you why the savings bank must be cautious in the amount it loans, is: "Now there is the Main Street Baptist Church, suppose we made a large loan upon it, and we had to foreclose the

mortgage, what could we do with it?'' And another is: ''Very sorry, but we have not a penny to lend.'' Then he holds out a ray of hope by courteously asking you to come again when in need.

## FLOYD CURTIS, FAITHFUL STEWARD.

Floyd Curtis, who is treasurer of the First National Bank, has hardly missed but a few days away from his desk in all the years I have been going there. Mr. Curtis

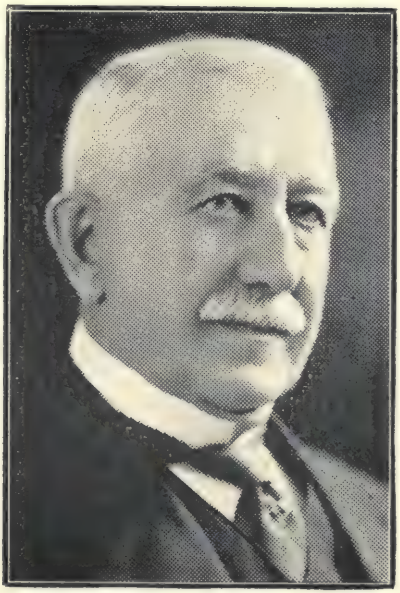
FLOYD CURTIS

is never ruffled, always courteous and greets you with a smile. He seldom gets far from the bank, his home and the Home Club. It is men like Mr. Curtis who are the

real sinew of the country the faithful watchdog, always on his job, patiently and correctly doing his bit in life.

## JOHN L. BILLARD.

Another old campaigner who has served coal and lumber to the public so long that he cannot divorce himself from the business is John L. Billard. If he should compute how many thousands of tons he has sold he would



JOHN L. BILLARD.
Sold Coal for Over 64 Years.

probably tell you that the train to haul it would reach from Meriden to Chicago and perhaps farther. Of course the whole country has heard of Mr. Billard, for he held in his possession for some time the destiny of the great

Boston and Maine Railroad system. It no doubt brought him more trouble than comfort.

Mr. Billard was president of the Meriden Savings Bank for years. For a long time both local savings banks discouraged mortgage loans, investing their money in what was then thought to be gilt-edge bonds. Outside savings banks had to be relied upon for local mortgage loans, but some relief finally came locally with the establishment of several building and loan associations. By practically having the field to themselves, these institutions progressed beyond expectations.

All around Meriden savings banks were loaning more than a majority of the amount of their deposits on real estate. I did not like the situation in Meriden so I published comparative statements of what the banks were doing in New Britain, Middletown, Wallingford, Berlin and Southington. The next day I saw Mr. Billard in his office. He is generally outwardly calm, but this morning his face was white with rage. His greeting was: "What you are printing about the banks, Mr. Atwater, will not do you any good." I was not concerned about myself, but I was about the public.

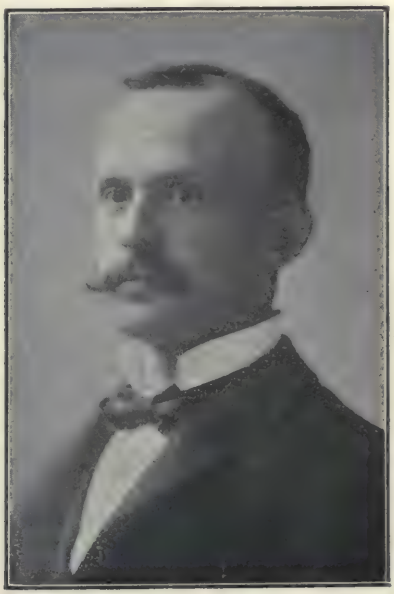
I have always had the opinion, and still hold it, that the first duty of a savings bank is to lend as much money at home as is practical. Our neighboring towns were doing so, loaning fully half of their deposits on local real estate, yet at home not over an eighth of the total was so invested. I explained this to Mr. Billard, who angrily retorted not $20,000 had been loaned by outside banks in Meriden in two years. I consulted the town records and found Mr. Billard was wrong, as over $70,000 had been loaned in only a few months. Mr. Billard has been too much of a business diplomat to let his temper get the best of him, but it did on this occasion. Whether I had any influence

HON. E. J. DOOLITTLE.

or not in changing conditions locally, one fact stands out, and if you will read the daily newspapers you will notice in big type the advertisement of the Meriden Savings Bank, which reads "We have money to Loan on Real Estate," which is all to the good.

## E. J. DOOLITTLE, VETERAN BANKER.

Another gentleman who has been in the same location and in the same line of business and wears the same smile



CHARLES S. PERKINS.

as he did over half a century ago is E. J. Doolittle, the veteran paperbox maker. His location is near the Camp street bridge. Mr. Doolittle was mayor for several terms,

state senator and a former railroad commissioner. Besides carrying on his paperbox business, he is now president of the Home National Bank, an institution he has been a director of for a long period. Mr. Doolittle has been one of Meriden's right-hand men, a patriotic citizen and never shirked any civic duty. With Mr. Doolittle

JUNIUS S. NORTON.

as the cashier of the Home National Bank is Charles S. Perkins. Outside of a period when Mr. Perkins was United States bank examiner, he has been connected with the bank since he was a boy. It is needless to say with his wide experience, there is not much for Mr. Perkins to learn in the national bank game.

## RECORD OF SORROWFUL CAREER.

I do not know of such a sad record in any other institution as befell the Home National Bank in a few years as in the necrology list of its officers and directors. First was the death of Abiram Chamberlain, who had long been its president. Junius S. Norton, who had been cashier, during the same period, became president. He had only held the office a short period when he was killed in an automobile accident. Charles H. Wood, who was made cashier to succeed Mr. Norton, suddenly developed bright's disease and his demise was sudden. He was succeeded by Louis Fisk, who in a few months was taken with a serious illness and never recovered. In the meantime the toll of death among the directors was heavy, among whom were Walter Hubbard, Edward Miller, Sr., I. L. Holt, Charles C. Glock and C. Berry Peets.

When I organized the Puritan Trust Company I tried to prevail upon Harold Scott to become its cashier. Mr. Scott is a Meriden boy, had been connected with the Home Bank for a long period, and I knew was very capable. He was reluctant to make the change. I argued he could not hope for any advancement where he was for there had not been a change for twenty years or over. Yet, in a very short period afterward changes came so rapid that it seemed a calamity.

## MERIDEN NATIONAL BANK CHANGES.

In the Meriden National Bank of the operating force there is not one there who occupies a position held eight years ago, resulting from death and resignations. Men may come and men may go, but well regulated institutions run on forever.

HON. BENJAMIN PAGE.

## BENJAMIN PAGE.

If I should tell the truth about Benjamin Page, I should say Meriden lost a good school teacher when Mr. Page went into the insurance business, but that was so many years ago but few of us remember it. Of all the calm, easy-going men I ever met, I think Mr. Page is the champion. He was at one time mayor and has held many minor offices. He is the oldest director of the Meriden National Bank, both in years and service, and also has had much to do with the Meriden Savings Bank. His firm now is Page & Pardee. I expect some of Mr. Page's pupils that he taught in South Meriden are full grown boys now, and perhaps grandfathers.

# LIFE HAS BEEN A BUSY ONE

**Sketch Written by Lewis Allen, Associate, Friend and Companion of a Life Time.**

Lewis Allen, a life long friend and companion of Mr. Atwater, in 1900 wrote as follows:

"The greater part of his life has been passed as a resident of the city of Meriden, and as a newspaper worker. There is no branch of newspaper work with which he is not thoroughly familiar from "printer's devil" to editor and publisher. In his youth he learned the trade of a printer, and so proficient did he become that while still a boy of only sixteen years he had charge of the mechanical department of the *Recorder*, then the leading daily paper of Meriden, and at the age of twenty he established the *Windermere Weekly Forum* in Wallingford, Conn., which he published for one year until it was sold. Subsequently for a time he was assistant foreman of the composing room of the Hartford *Courant*, one of the oldest and best known journals of New England.

"Later Mr. Atwater went West for his health, to Red Bluff, Cal., and there gained additional experience as manager of the Red Bluff (Tehama County, Cal.) *Sentinel*. Upon his return to Meriden he established a large job printing office. Then he embarked in journalism on his own account, publishing the Meriden *Sunday News*. But

once-a-week newspaper did not afford him an active enough field, and upon the demise of the Meriden *Evening Press* Mr. Atwater hastened to occupy the field, launching the Meriden *Daily Journal* in connection with several friends, they forming The Journal Publishing Company about 1886.

"Mr. Atwater brought to bear upon *The Journal* all the ability and experience he possessed and the result was that the enterprise proved one of the most successful in the history of New England daily journalism. From the start the paper was prosperous, and year by year it grew until to-day it is one of the best paying properties in its line in the state. It occupies its own fire-proof building in the business center of Meriden, and is completely equipped, not only as a newspaper, with fast presses, typesetting machines and stereotyping outfit, but also as regards a book and job printing plant, a book bindery and an electrotyping department second to none in Connecticut. Mr. Atwater is the first and only president of The Journal Publishing Company, and from its inception he has been the controlling manager. His special department has been the mechanical, but in every branch his influence has been felt, and every detail has come under his watchful, experienced eye.

"All his life Mr. Atwater has devoted himself strictly to business. Except as a newspaper man he has taken no part in politics, and he has sought no political office. By means of *The Journal* he helped organize the Meriden Board of Trade, and in due time he was elected its president, a position which he still holds. Shortly after his election, in casting about for some enterprise that would benefit Meriden, the project of building an electric railway in a westerly direction over the West Mountain to the town of Southington, a distance of eight miles, occurr-

ed to him. Upon investigation he found that a charter for such a road had been secured only a few months before, but nothing more had been done owing to the difficulty in securing the necessary capital to build the road, a sum in the neighborhood of $220,000. Mr. Atwater immediately proceeded to organize the Meriden, Southington & Compounce Tramway Company, bestirred himself to interest capitalists in the enterprise, and in an incredibly short time had the necessary money raised, and the construction of the road was begun. Mr. Atwater gave personal supervision to the work, and in sixty working days trolley cars were making regular trips between Southington and Meriden greatly to the satisfaction of the residents of both places, and especially the merchants of Meriden. Later the road was extended to Lake Compounce, one of the most beautiful summer resorts in the state, and now the thousands who go there daily for recreation during the season have cause to bless the foresight and skill of the one who made possible such a pleasant trip. Financially the road has been equally successful, having paid dividends to its stockholders for years.

"Upon the end of the Spanish-American war, Mr. Atwater was requested by Miss Clara Barton, of Red Cross fame and honor, an old family friend who knew him from childhood, to accompany her to Cuba where she went to establish asylums for the unfortunate reconcentrados, and act as her financial agent. Desiring to get away for a vacation, Mr. Atwater went with her. While in Havana he saw an opportunity to establish a newspaper there. He embraced it and the Havana *Journal* was started, the first all-American daily journal in Cuba. He retained control of the *Journal* until he received a handsome offer for it, when he sold it to a syndicate which still publishes it under the name of the Havana *Post*. Another newspaper

venture of Mr. Atwater's was located near home—at New Britain, Conn. He bought the *Daily News* of that city and ran it until the time came for him to dispose of it to advantage, which he did. He next bought the *Waterbury Republican,* the only morning paper in the Naugatuck Valley, and is still its owner. During the present year Mr. Atwater has become interested in the Cheshire Water Company and the building of a trolley road that will run from Meriden to Waterbury in one direction and to New Haven in another, a distance of some twenty-seven miles.

"From the foregoing it will be seen that Mr. Atwater's life has been a very busy one. He stands as an admirable type of the hustling Connecticut Yankee. In his undertakings he has always been very conservative. He works slowly in laying his plans, but once started, his push and energy are irresistible. All his important undertakings have been marked by much success in conception, execution and results. He is a man of the world, having traveled extensively, yet home never loses its attraction for him. His residence is one of the finest in location and construction in Meriden, and is furnished with artistic elegance throughout. Here his many friends are always sure of a hospitable welcome and lavish entertainment.

"In 1879 he married Helena J. Sellew, to whom was born, May 10, 1880, a son, Dorence Keith Atwater. He lived to pass his twentieth birthday, when he was accidentally drowned."

The following is from the pen of Mr. Allen in an editorial he published:

"Dorence Keith Atwater was a son of whom any parents might be proud, a young man who was most highly regarded throughout the community. Of fine principle, strict integrity, and the manners and habits of

a true gentleman, he made friends of all with whom he was brought in contact. Then he was above the average in intelligence and ability as shown by his progress as a student, so that if ever there was a youth with a career of unusual promise and prominence before him, here was one. Yet he was taken away, and those who loved him are left to mourn. As we knew him he was such a manly fellow, so cheerful and courteous to all, so faithful and willing, such a good friend, so attached to his home—sad it is to think that we shall never again see him in life. He was his father's pride, his mother's joy, and in return he was devoted to his parents as few children are. Yet the parting has come. It is well to manifest sympathy, and in this particularly sad case all must feel it, but it can do little assuage the great grief of the sorely afflicted ones. That must be left to time. We can only pay our tribute to the dead as we have tried to do here, and speak of him as we had knowledge of him—One of the manliest, truest, brightest lads in all our whole acquaintance."

(*New Britian News.*)

"A girl on her deathbed was asked what was hardest to leave behind. 'The future.' she whispered. It always seems as if death dealt a severer stroke when his scythe takes a young man or woman. The unbounded possibiliteies of the future are all for good.

"Dorence Keith Atwater, son of proprietor Francis Atwater of the *Daily News*, whose sad death is mentioned in our news dispatches, was scarcely twenty years old. He was an exceptionally bright young man, a student and a worker, and was a member of the junior class at Sheffield Scientific school at Yale.

"In passing from the two lower classes he had been awarded high honors and his professors spoke in glowing

terms of his exceptional scholarship. Dorence was an only child, the idol of his parents and the hope of a busy father who expected soon to shift the weight of business cares on his sturdy young shoulders. He had all opportunities and gave every promise of a brilliant future.

"The hearts of all true mothers and fathers will go out to the grieved parents in their bereavement. His young friends will mourn their loss and the older ones who knew his sterling qualities, will grieve with the parents in the sudden death of this young man."

(*Meriden Morning Record.*)

"The tragic death of Dorence K. Atwater cut off, on the threshold of manhood, a life of unusual promise. The sympathy for the sorely bereaved parents which will be felt in Meriden to-day, when the sad news becomes generally known, will not be of the formal or perfunctory sort, but deep and sincere, for the young man had a wide acquaintance in the community and was cordially liked by all who knew him.

"By those who knew him best the news of his untimely end will be received with a realizing sense of personal affliction."

# HISTORIES AND GENEALOGY.

**Histories of Towns of Plymouth and Kent, Proceedings Meriden Centennial, Atwater Genealogy.**

As stated elsewhere I compiled the history of my native town of Plymouth, Conn., first as a souvenir history, and later a regular bound volume of some 400 pages. This was in 1895. The next year I published the History of Kent, Conn., a town near the New York border, abounding in country yore. In 1900 I printed the first volume of Atwater Genealogy, in 1907 the second volume, and in 1918 the third. In 1908, I compiled the Proceedings of the Meriden Centennial. In 1919 and 1920 the Atwater Family in North Carolina, succeeded by a family reunion in Chapel Hill, N. C., attended by 350 out of some 400 descendants living in that vicinity of Enos Atwater, who went from Cheshire and settled in Virginia about 1770. Of the first volume of Atwater History the Waterbury American had this to say:

"Interest in genealogical research is very apt to grow into a hobby if the person interested has time to follow it up. Even the person who has not time for exhaustive research often enjoys picking up some book detailing the history of a family comparatively unknown to him, tracing the various branches and here and there lighting unexpectedly on some familiar name of whose connection with his particular family he was previously unaware.

And if the volume contains the records some family with whom the reader is more or less familiar it is doubly enjoyable.

"The "Atwater History and Genealogy" compiled by Francis Atwater of The Meriden Journal and the Waterbury Republican is well printed and bound volume of nearly 500 pages containing a vast amount of useful and interesting information. The title page bears in its prop-

ATWATER ANCESTRAL HOME.
It Was Built in 1500 and Still Standing—Front View.

er heraldic colors the "Arms and Crest confirmed to Robert Atwater of Royton Manor in Lenham by William Harvey Clarenceaux Herald at Arms in 1564." The additional information is given that the same arms were worn by John Water, York Herald, Times of Edward IV—Henry VII, who 'assisted at the solemnity of Edward's funeral,' 1483. Also by Thomas Waters, Carlisle Herald, Edward IV—Henry VIII. They are described as "sable

on a fesse wavy argent, between three swans on the second, two bars, wavy azure, crest a demi-talbot argent, in the mouth and arrow guls."

"The origin of the Atwater family in the United States is traced with certainty to and in the county of Kent, England; the surname appearing very early in English records, both in various forms of the English language, and in Latin as ad Aquam and ad Aqua. It appears in

ATWATER ANCESTRAL HOME.
Located in Lenham, Kent County, England—Side View.

but twelve of the forty counties of England, the most northern of these counties being scarcely more than 100 miles from the south coast. In some of these it appears as early as 1325. The earliest mention of the name known is in the county of Kent, parish of Stone, "where the name Godefried ate Water occurs in connection with the manor of Eylvarton before the year 1257." All the ancestors of the American Atwaters, however, seem to have

belonged in the parish of Lenham, in Poytin, about ten miles from Ospringe. John Atwater, of Royton, was the father of Joshua, David and Anne Atwater, who came to America June 26, 1637, in the company of Messrs. Eaton, Davenport and others, founders of the New Haven colony. Joshua Atwater was one of the seven men who, accompanying Mr. Eaton from Boston to New Haven, remained in a hut on what is now the corner of Church and Meadow streets, New Haven, during the winter of 1637-8 to make observations. It is believed that the descendants of Joshua Atwater in the male line are extinct, as none who bear the name in America can be found who do not trace their lineage to his brother, David. Joshua died May 16, 1676.

"It is supposed that David Atwater, who remained in Boston while his brother went to Quinnipiac with Mr. Eaton's company, did not go to New Haven till the spring of 1638. Besides the town lot assigned to him, as to the rest of the original settlers, the plantation assigned to David Atwater in the original division of lands among the planters was in the Neck, between Mill and Quinnipiac rivers, at the north of the present city of New Haven, the general name of Cedar Hill applying to this region. The eldest male representative in each succeeding generation was born there, and for a time at least, resided there, and there are still descendants of the original David residing at Cedar Hill.

"A great deal more of interest and value regarding the history of the Atwater family both in England and America, is given in the first pages of the volume, with pictures, genealogical charts, etc., showing a infinite amount of patient study and research on the part of the compilers. There are family letters, list of properties, copies

of wills and other documents, all of which throw much light on the family history.

"After the first ninety-four pages, the rest of the book is mainly taken up with genealogical records, which even a casual glance shows to have been compiled with rare skill and patience, so full and complete are they in all details, and so many bits of interesting biographical and historical matter are sandwiched in among them. Among

CARVED OAK MANTEL.
It is Preserved in the Old Ancestral Home.

the pictures is one of the old brick house on State street, in the Cedar Hill district of New Haven, which, according to tradition, was built by the second David Atwater, and is still in possession of one of his descendants. He died January 10, 1736. A silver baptismal bowl which has a curious interesting history, the gift of Jeremiah Atwater to the "First (Center) church of New Haven," is still in the possession of that church. There are plenty

of interesting people, prominent in Connecticut history, all the way down the line, including the poetical Judge Amzi Atwater, of Ohio; founder of the wholesale commission firm of Atwater, Mulford & Co., of New York city; and many others whom lack of space and time forbid us to mention in detail.

"The dedication of the volume to the son of the compiler, Dorence Keith Atwater, is peculiarly touching. It reads:

"This volume is affectionately dedicated to the memory of

DORENCE KEITH ATWATER,

son of the compiler and publisher, who was drowned August 23, 1900, aged 20 years and 3 months. It is fitting and appropriate that he should be the recipient of this dedication, as he was not only an Atwater in name, but by character, habit, build and in general make-up. He was tall, well-proportioned, had the high cheek bones of the Atwaters, kindly eyes, was of tender and affectionate disposition, was manly, upright and honest; of high principles, and was a conscientious student. He had no low traits. He never lied, nor was he given to deceit of any kind. He was cut off at the beginning of manhood, when all that he had done was in the nature of a preparation of what he expected to do. His efforts were all tending toward a successful career, and none doubted that victory would crown his work. He is gone, his parents' hearts are grieved and broken, and the only consolation afforded them is the memory of the eminent qualities which he possessed."

# LIFE IN SOUTHINGTON.

**Reminiscenses of Early Days and People Written for the Times and News.**

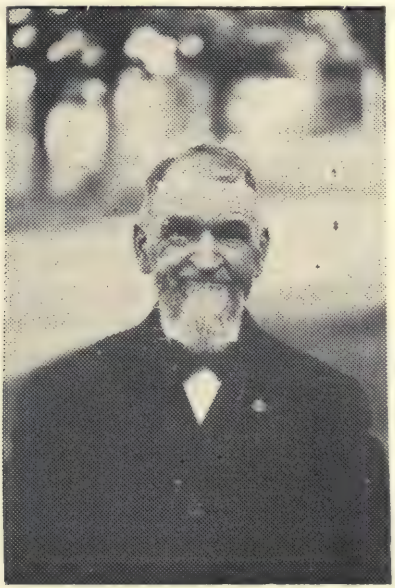
The proprietor of the News and Times invites me to tell of my life in the lower part of the town of Southington when I went to school there, which was in the years 1866 to 1870. I first boarded near Hitchcock's Station, now called Milldale, in the Tenth district. My first teacher was Mary Webster who was, and perhaps is now, livin the South End district.

Of the scholars there was Reuben Barnes, George Wood, Charles Kilbourne, Charles Persiana, Fred and Charles Bowers, Fred Dickerman, the Twitchell brothers and many others who have escaped my memory. I shall never forget my reception in the school yard which was to be unexpectedly knocked down, but my surprise was no greater than I returned for, with a vigorous use of my dinner pail there was some sore heads resulting from the onslaught.

I boarded with William Peck, who lived south of the brick yards owned by Isaac Burritt, who was a brother of Elihu Burritt, the "learned blacksmith" of New Britain. Of the old timers there was Reuben Barnes, Sr., Samuel Bradley, the Clark brothers, William J., Henry and Charles H., William J. Cummings, Mr. Hotchkiss, father of Orlando, the Dickermans, Rutherford, Parker, Neale and Wood families. Of the older people I only

know of Uncle Charley Clark being left. I want to say right here if every town had a few public spirited citizens like Uncle Charley they would have something to boast of.

The Clark Brothers started before my time to manufacture bolts. Their shops were located at the Hotchkiss



HON. CHARLES H. CLARK.
Southington's Most Cherished Citizen.

corner on the Quinnipiac river, from which they derived their power. Since they formed a joint stock corporation and are now located on the railroad track near the Milldale depot. William J., the senior brother, was a "Forty-niner" as was Andrew Barnes of the Marion district. I knew the three brothers personally. They were men of good character, honest and upright.

My brother, Eugene, started under the name of Atwater & Dodd to manufacture jewelry; first from vegetable ivory, then boxwood and lastly from horn. The old shop which stood near the Burritt brick yard had a large overshot water wheel fed from a canal which ran from a pond south of the Plantsville sand plains. The upper floor not used for manufacturing was used for weekly dancing, when the virginia reel, quadrilles, etc., were in fashion. Fred Larabee, the Marion weather prophet, is the only one I recall now living who was a regular attendant. The young people of those days surely did enjoy themselves at these festivities.

Fifty-five years is a long time back. Of course no one had ever thought of an electric road. When I left Southington to learn the printer's trade I had no reason to believe fortune would ever bring me back to locate and build an electric road through the old Tenth district where I was glad to walk to its temple of learning. Such, however, was fate.

The late T. H. McKenzie, with others, had obtained a charter for an electric road from Meriden to Lake Compounce. They appealed to the Meriden Board of Trade of which I was president, to help them carry the scheme through. The result was that I offered to buy for $300 the charter and if I did not build the road in one year they could keep the money and have the charter back. The offer was accepted. This was in August, 1897. I associated myself with John A. Hurley, of Meriden. We had the road surveyed. We struggled with the towns of Meriden and Southington to have selectmen approve our layout but did not succeed in getting these approvals until the following March. In the meantime we applied and secured an injunction against the Consolidated road to prevent it from usurping our right of way. Work was started

April 2, 1898, and nine miles from Crow Hollow, Meriden, to Southington Center, were completed and cars running on July 4, although we had only eleven working days in April on account of frequent rains. We also built and equipped the power house at Milldale and erected eight large and small bridges. I may add no other railroad of this mileage was ever erected as quickly in Connecticut.

Other negotiations were concluded a year later to run our cars into Meriden. Afterwards the road was continued to Lake Compounce, connected with Plainville and New Britain and Cheshire and New Haven.

There was only one staunch friend in either Meriden or Southington who belived we would ever put the enterprise through and if we did that it would succeed. That gentleman was the venerable and honorable Charles H. Clark. God bless his soul. May he live more than a century to be revered and blessed. Subsequently he fathered and built the Green Line from Milldale to Waterbury. His stubborn persistency to build this road is a glowing tribute to his loyalty to Southington.

While I know I was a small factor in putting the town on the map and connecting it north, south and east, I want to pay tribute to Uncle Charley for aiding in this work, but doing alone the final connection to Wolcott and Waterbury. I say, again, I wish there were more Charley Clarks in every town.

Mr. Clark gave us the land upon which we erected our power house. It was swampy and we anticipated no trouble in sinking wells, and obtaining all the water needed for our boilers. One well was sunk 700 feet deep. We had contracted to pay a certain price, but the day we wanted to use it the contractor refused to pull his drill out unless we paid him an extra $200. We drew water for several days in barrels, but finally compromised the

holdup by splitting the difference. Several other wells were driven fifty feet or more deep. One day every well was pumped dry, and we had to cart water as before. Finally we induced the water company to lay mains for our relief. Adjoining this lot was one owned by Albert Hitchcock, now deceased. We were desirous of adding a few feet of it to our land. We approached Mr. Hitchcock, but he refused to sell as he said on that portion was an unfailing spring which furnished water for his cattle, pastured there. That summer the spring went dry. Mr. Hitchcock said that we had stolen his water. I told him if he could prove it, we would pay for it. He said humorously if he could go down our six inch pipe 700 feet he would make us settle.

One of our open cars was No. 13. With no apparent cause every little while it would jump the rails and run off several feet. People became superstitous and would pass it by. It seemed a regular hoodoo. The next winter when the body was removed from the truck for painting purposes it was found that it had been attached in such a way as to spring it from its regular channels. Thus the peculiar actions of No. 13 were explained.

When we organized the Meriden, Southington and Lake Compounce Tramway Company, we asked Judge Marcus H. Holcomb what he would charge us to do the legal work. He replied that he would charge $100, but as he was interested to have the electric road built we could pay him what we pleased. Besides that legal work, there were many complications coming up requiring considerable of a lawyer's time. One day I asked him what we owed him. He replied that we could each mark down what he should receive. I marked $1,000. He put down $1,114. I asked him what the $14 was for. He said it was probably petty expenses, and then added

good naturedly it might be all he was worth, but at any rate my price of $1,000 was satisfactory. He was then and had been for years judge of probate. Later, he was county commissioner, speaker of the house, attorney general, and lastly governor of the state for three consecutive terms, serving during the war, when people with one accord were averse "to swapping horses in the middle of a stream." Governor Holcomb has returned to private life, lives in Southington, enjoying the esteem and honors of a useful and well spent career.

I had a particular friend who upon learning I was to build an electric road told me frankly I was a d—— fool, and would lose any money put into it. About three months after its completion I asked him if he had been over the d—— fool venture. He said no. It was in the forenoon. I invited him to take the trip. He said he could not go then, but would in the afternoon. The car we happened to take was so crowded we had to stand up all the way to Southington. I wanted to take the next car back, but he said he had not eaten any lunch, and if I would join him we could go to the hotel. When he had finished we returned on a car that was crowded fully as much as the one we came on. The next day he said he would not take the car either way, I selected as he thought I knew in advance there was to be a crowd, but confessed the d—— fool should be taken from my shoulders and placed on his.

The road was divided into four fare sections. We had considerable trouble with conductors "knocking down." On one trip a new conductor who did not know who I was failed to ring up several fares in the first two sections. In the third section there were 33 passengers, but the cash register did not show any nickels accounted for. When I told him I was president of the road and demand-

ed every fare taken, he was glad to turn the money over, was given a hasty push, a parting kick. I rang the bell, and served as conductor until I arrived at the car barn. It was my first and only experience in that line.

In locating the line of the road we needed a few feet of land to avoid using the town bridge at Dickerman's corner. It was owned by an old widow lady. She objected to selling. I asked her reason. She said the children would get on the track and get killed. I asked her if she had any little ones, and she replied "No." I queried if she expected any more at her age, she said she hoped not. I found it easier to get a town meeting called which gave me permission to move the bridge a few feet to the north, than to overcome her fears what might happen to infant mortality.

I found old Mr. Curtis at Stillman's corners obstinate as to our taking a few feet along the highway of his land. While we could have taken it by condemnation proceedings we were in too much of a hurry to get into any legal tangle. Mr. Curtis finally explained that he would not encourage an electric road because his son and son-in-law would ride on it, and neglect their business. After it was completed it was too much of a temptation to Mr. Curtis. He rode over it nearly every day and took lots of enjoyment out of it. His grandchildren used it in going to school in both uptown Southington and Meriden.

In building the trolley road through the borough of Plantsville, we had set three or four poles when we had a visit from Warden Neale, who informed us we could not use the locations we had started. The warden was a thick set, fat man and the day was one of the hottest in June. I said, alright warden, I will give you two men with a tape line and a man with an axe and some stakes, then you can put a stake not over 125 feet or less than

100 feet from each other and at each designated spot we will set a pole. Not over five such markers were set when the warden, with perspiration dripping from his face, returned. He said he had done enough, he was no catspaw, and we could set our poles as we pleased.

Another disgruntled citizen had a borough meeting called to have a switch track removed from in front of his house. After the matter had been fully discussed, I told the meeting if this protestant was better than his neighbor we would remove it in front of the next house, but an affirmative vote would say he was a privileged character, which I did not think the borough would want to be a party to such discrimination; so the switch was not moved.

# MEMBER STATE SENATE.

**Strenuous Fight With the King of the Lobby Who Was Soon Silenced.**

When things were going calmly and serenely and I had no thought of ever having anything to do with politics there came into my office one day Christian F. Fisher and one or two others. I was asked if I would take the nomination for state senator on the Democratic ticket. I told them I was radically independent, not a party man, and I didn't think it would be well for me or the party to be named. The gentlemen were good enough to say I suited them. I never knew when the caucus took place but read in the morning paper that I had been nominated. I considered Mr. Fisher a friend. He probably meant well. George E. Bicknell was my opponent, and was an easy victor. The second time I was nominated, two years later, while I did not seek the nomination, I made up my mind to put some "pep" into the campaign. I did so. There was considerable fun in the combat, and I was elected by a handsome majority. W. H. Lyon, he was called "Popular Will," was my opponent. He was especially anxious to get elected as his old-time chum, Rollin S. Woodruff, was running for governor. At the close of election I met Mr. Lyon on the Home Club steps. We shook

hands. He said, "People apparently approve of your style of campaigning," and added "but you had an advantage, you had a newspaper." I said yes, and furthermore I was not afraid to use it.

## MERIDEN'S GUM SHOE POLITICIANS

Thomas H. Warnock is now grandfather in editorial life in Meriden. Tom generally is easy-going, but when he comes to has a pungent pen which hits the nail on the head. Like myself he has not much use for the cowardly politician. When I was nominated for senator the interim between then and election was quite spicy. Of course I did not have a permit from the local rulers of destiny to seek election. One night they called upon "Uncle Tom" and solemnly told him it was his duty to give Atwater hell, but not to say they said so. Abiram Chamberlain was the leader. "Uncle Tom" listened patiently. When their exit took place, a proper title came to his mind, and the next morning Meriden read of its "gum shoe" politicians and what they wanted him to do to Atwater.

## FRANK S. FAY'S PREDICTION

In a meeting about this time, Frank S. Fay said if I was elected I would be about as useful as a minority member as a scratching hen or something to that effect. The next evening when I stated a few things pointedly I could do, Mr. Fay replied he was only joking.

Fay was not much of a prophet as to what I could do if elected for out of fifteen bills I introduced thirteen of them were passed, among them the appropriation of $90,000 for the armory which stands upon the hill. The

night it was dedicated William H. Lyon, who was master of ceremonies, said upon introducing Governor Woodruff, that he was the man who made the armory possible. Not belittling the governor I will state his effort was simply signing the resolution. How it was passed is another story.

W. H. LYON.

## HOW MERIDEN ARMORY WAS SECURED

The average citizen no doubt believes that when measures are introduced in the legislature they are treated upon their merits, but as a rule they are not, and very often to get one measure supported a promise

has to be made to support another. That is what happened with the bill in regard to the Meriden armory. Senator Patrick McGovern was chairman of the appropriation committee. He wanted a state library and an arsenal, built and located in Hartford. The cost would

MERIDEN'S ARMORY.

reach up into hundreds of thousands of dollars. I am told he wanted to be mayor of Hartford and figured if he could get these magnificent buildings it would help his campaign. To make these appropriations others must be curtailed, among them the Meriden armory, the doing away with toll bridges needing a large sum and many other things. Senator McGovern was only

one, and there were thirty-four other senators, some of whom were fathering schemes of their own. So with so many to be placated to get the library and arsenal insured there were overtures made to give and take. I met Senator McGovern and spent from early evening until 4 o'clock one morning when an agreement was reached which settled the granting of $90,000 for the Meriden armory. Mr. Lyon no doubt intended to make an honest statement. When he reads this he will know the truth for it is the first time it has been made public. Another sequel to this story is that Senator McGovern did get the nomination for mayor of Hartford, but was defeated at election.

## KING OF THE LOBBY SILENCED

Another resolution that had a stormy passage was the granting of the charter to the Meriden, Middletown and Guilford Electric railway. After the committee had passed favorably upon the petition, I was accosted by Edward D. Robbins, attorney for the N. Y., N. H. & H. R. R. He asked me to vote against what then was called the Morris Cove charter. When I told him I intended to support the measure he asked if I thought it was good policy to oppose his company. I told him I did not know or care. He said he understood I had introduced some fifteen resolutions and did I believe I could get even one through in opposition to him, and shaking his fist in my face, added he would like to see me do it. I had known Robbins to be the shrewd, crafty lawyer, who by the crook of his finger, controlled twenty-three out of thirty-five votes and that he was an unscrupulous enemy. A few days later I asked and was granted the privilege of the senate floor. The protec-

tion of the state of Connecticut was over my head. I described him as the king of the lobby and told all I knew of his disreputable organization of the senate, the calling out of senators and dictating how they should vote, and much more of his history. I did not ask for any investigation but hoped to make him so notorious he would cease his corrupt ways. Knowing so many senators were at his beck and call, I had not sought support, nor expected any. To my amazement the late Hon. Stiles Judson, of Stratford, the orator of the senate and a forceful speaker, boldly took up the subject and in words of condemnation and scorn flayed Robbins as he deserved, his concluding sentence being: "This man has debauched more souls than any man in the state of Connecticut." The "king" was killed that afternoon so far as his nefarious control of the senate was concerned. In fact I have never seen him in the lobby from that day to this.

## CHAIRMAN WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE COMMITTEE

When the senate was organized I was given the chairmanship of the woman's suffrage and some minor committees. This was to punish me for being in the minority. Woman's suffrage I had been an advocate of for many years, but this was not known to those who made the assignment. The other members were only luke warm on the subject. We gave a public hearing in the auditorium of the house. It was well patronized, men and women from far and near attending, nearly all in favor of granting women the franchise. I persuaded the committee to make a unanimous report to both houses favorably. The day when it was to be acted upon in the senate I was quietly told by nearly all the

senators that I could count upon their support. I knew some joke was to be attempted, but not its nature. When the clerk read the resolution I arose, spoke in its favor and asked that it be favorably acted upon. A brother senator moved that when the vote should be taken it be by each senator rising. It had been schemed to have me rise while all the others remained seated. I turned the joke by also remaining seated. Finally on the third call I arose and addressing the president made a motion that as all the senators had assured me that they were in favor of the passage of the bill, they should be excused from voting and that the clerk be instructed that my vote should stand as the unanimous expression of the senate. It was so reported to the house, which however did not sustain it.

## FIGHT FOR MERIDEN GAS COMPANY

The Meriden Gas Light Company wanted the right to extend its mains to Southington. The Wallingford company asked for the same privilege, but at that time its facilities for furnishing gas even for home consumption were poor. It was owned by Clarence E. Thompson, a senator from New Haven. He was chairman of the railroad committee and a tool of the Consolidated Road or at any rate did whatever it wanted him to do. There were twenty-three out of thirty-five senators who were called the "black brigade," because they always lined up to vote for anything the railroad asked for. Many were under direct favors and others no doubt were paying off political obligations. Thompson, with the railroad patronage, won out in the senate, but by using this fact with members of the house he was turned down there and the Meriden company given

preference. This made a deadlock. Two years later the home concern had its request granted.

## WHAT MR. ATWATER DID FOR MERIDEN

In 1911 I ran on an independent ticket for mayor against Daniel J. Donovan. The following editorial was the reply during the campaign to one inquiry:

"The Republican organette asks what Mr. Atwater has done for Meriden and for the workingmen. If the alleged leader had any realization of what Mr. Atwater has done since he came here to help make this a better city he would not have laid himself open to criticism by such a question.

"Mr. Atwater has always stood for progress and he has aided, or fathered, every movement that has had for its thought the improvement of conditions and the aim to make Meriden better known.

"He organized the first board of trade and since that time he has been active in encouraging new industries and helping those concerns which were already established but needed assistance.

"He has not only worked to help others and given his time and energy freely but he has also contributed money to all undertakings. He contributed $1,000 toward the new theater, $500 toward the subscription to bring the Fire Arms factory here, $500 toward the new Board of Trade factory and $2,000 to the Silver City Realty company.

"He gave $200 toward the Y. W. C. A. building, $100 to help in the erection of the Universalist church and has been a constant contributor to the Hospital fund, the Boys' club, the Y. M. C. A., the City Mission and other charitable and benevolent organizations.

"Since the Curtis Memorial library was founded he has given more in money and books than any other person in this city outside the members of the Curtis family. His gifts in this direction will total over $10,000.

"He erected the first fire-proof building in the city and tore down an old shack to make room for it. This week will see also the removal of another old eyesore on Perkins stret and the start made toward erecting a modern structure in its place.

"The Journal Publishing company was one of the very first of its kind in the state to adopt the eight-hour schedule for its employes and that spirit has been a feature ever since.

"In his attitude toward employment of labor he has been progressive and always met conditions. So successful has he been in considering the labor conditions that some of the employes in his establishment have been employed there twenty-five years, while others have been twenty years and more with the firm.

"While he served in the state senate his attitude was marked by the same progressive spirit and was at the time the cause of much favorable comment by labor men.

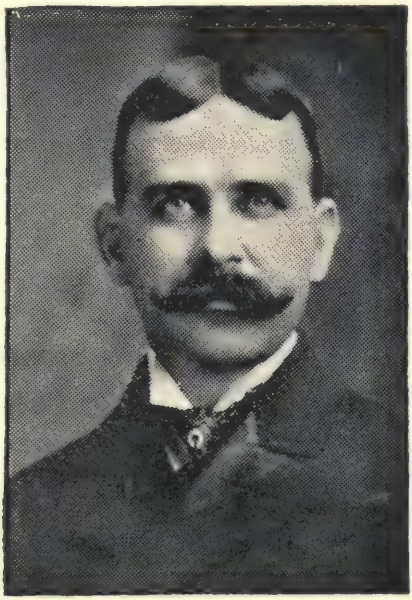
"He was instrumental in securing the passage of the bill which reduced the hours of work for the telegraphers and he also favored the workmen's compensation bill, which was up for consideration then.

"These are some of the things that Mr. Atwater has

done, which show his position toward labor and progress and his record will stand alone on its merit."

## MADE TAX DODGERS SETTLE

Years ago when I saw the huge amount of uncollected taxes going on from year to year, only increasing all the time, the amount reaching for the town nearly



JOHN F. MC DONNELL.

$100,000, I remonstrated in town meeting that the tax collector should be called to account. The next year one evening just before the calling of a Democratic caucus John F. McDonnell, salesman for the International

Silver company, asked me if I would take the nomination for collector. I told John that I did not think it would be well for the party. John saw to it I was nominated. Like "Chris" Fischer, who fathered my nomination for senator, he knew not what he was leading me to.

At any rate we had a red hot campaign. I told the electors on every street corner if I was elected I would not be a receiver but a collector of taxes, high or low, rich or poor, every dollar would be collected. The promise seemed to meet with approval. I was given a substantial majority over my opponent, I. L. Holt, who had been the receiver of taxes for a great many years. When the books came into my possession I had the amounts put on ledger cards, thoroughly indexed so they could be found quickly. To my astonishment there were over 9,000 delinquent poll and military tax debtors, hundreds of whom had left town and could not be located, while of business and real estate taxes the back amounts called for thousands of dollars.

When I announced my purpose to clean up the books there was a storm of protest from the office holders and ward heelers of the Democratic party. If I only collected for my own term I would be on the road to the nomination for governor. The warrants given me by the selectmen covered all previous years, and my promise to collect all the taxes was more sacred than the bait of caprice that I might some day be nominated for continued political disturbance. I would rather have my independent manhood than any office in the gift of the people if it was at the price of sacrificing duty and catering to the thugs and holdups of low down politics. I carried out my policy. To prevent it some 700 of the

tax dodgers formed an Anti-Poll and Military Tax association. They hired two cheap lawyers who egged them on. What they threatened to do if the hair of a member was touched would fill a book. Then, after quite a parley with the selectmen, a town meeting was called. The collector was forcefully denounced and a resolution was passed to the effect that any person who offered $2 in payment of his poll and military tax should be given a receipt in full. As a town meeting cannot change a state law the vote was of no effect. The president of the association was arrested. He was convicted in the city court. The decision was appealed to the state supreme court and was there sustained. Of course after that there was a race to the collector's office to settle. As I remember it 500 warrants were issued, some fifty arrested and ten appeared in court.

## COWARDLY SET OF LAWYERS

When you touch people's pocket books you immediately get into disfavor. Of the lawyers I asked to act for me only one had the courage to—the late P. T. O'Brien. The rest of them were cowed by the multitude of tax dodgers. Justices of the peace ducked, constables refused to serve warrants. Judge Dunne, who was then prosecuting attorney, begged to be excused. Ex-Judge Frank S. Fay had the sand to sustain an important arm of the government. It looked at one time as if I would have to appeal to the governor to impeach some of the weak-kneed, scared officials. The tax dodgers openly threatened bodily harm, but my answer was if they did not want to pay taxes they ought to go to the desert of Sahara where there were none to pay.

I told them I was not afraid of what they would do for if they were tax dodgers and dead beats they were cowards.

## SUPPORT OF COLLECTOR SPINELESS

The people that patted me on the back and told me I was doing a grand and noble work were many. When I asked them if I could quote them they invariably answered, "No. They would be boycotted." I asked them how they expected a collector, who was depending upon his salary, could be expected to collect taxes if no one dare come out in the open in his defense. Of course I only took the job to show that it was not impossible to do the work, Now these taxes are collected all over the state. Many years have passed since I was in office, but the echo of some of the "cussing" of those days is re-echoed now at times when the subject is rehashed. I ran for office independently a second time, neither party daring to give me a regular nomination. Without any organization or party support I received nearly 1800 votes, the Democratic nominee some 900 and the Republican nominee 2500.

# SMALL TOWN AFFAIRS.

**Why the Author Became the Organizer of the Puritan Trust Company.**

The people of Meriden are in a class by themselves. I have had experience with many other communities, coming in direct contact with the citizens, but none so apparently luke-warm, indifferent to their own welfare or the progress of the city. Somehow there is very little team work. The majority just as soon look on and let one man shoulder any public improvement. Yet when it is accomplished they are not loath to criticise it and tell how much better it could have been done some other way. I call a spade a spade. There is no use beating about the bush and describe a spade as a useful instrument for horticultural, agricultural and other purposes. History that does not state the truth is not worth reading.

## MERIDEN COULD HAVE HAD A BIG CONCERN

I served as president of the Meriden Board of Trade for many years. I desired action. At my own expense and time I did a great deal of travelling to look into projects that might benefit the town. I was in the prime of life, had at least ordinary good judgment, was full of enthusiasm. Of course of the many opportunities

presented for consideration of a board of trade there are more snides by far than those that have merit. I remember one in partciular that recommended itself to me as being a perfectly safe venture to endeavor to interest Meriden in. It was the big Higgins Carpet company, whose establishment was located in New York. This company considered its property was too valuable for other purposes and was casitng about for a location. I heard of it and went to see the manager. Offers were coming in from many places of free sites, factories, free water, free taxes, etc. I was told that if Meriden would donate twelve acres of land and $200,000 for moving expenses, that the company would locate here, erect buildings costing at least a million dollars and would employ not less than 2,500 hands. With the families of these employes it meant an increase in one jump of from 8,000 to 10,000 in population.

I was quite enthusiastic. I figured that the mercantile and real estate interests alone could afford to raise and donate this amount which while large in the aggregate was small compared to the enlarged business the stores could do and the increase resulting in real estate. I did not get any support, but had so much cold water poured down my back that the chill lasted some time.

## MERIDEN AND SOUTHINGTON ELECTRIC ROAD

The first thing acted upon by the Board of Trade was appointing myself to meet a committee of Southington people to see what could be done in regard to building an electric road between Meriden, Southington and Lake Compounce. I had to deal mostly with the late Theodore H. McKenzie. His makeup was of the small

potato kind. Becoming disgusted with his penurious ways I told him I would give $300 for the charter the Southington incorporators had secured. If I did not complete the road in one year they could have the charter back and keep the $300. It was the commencement of trouble.

I finally induced John A. Hurley, of the Meriden Brewing company, to take a half interest. We formed the Meriden, Southington and Lake Compounce Tramway company. We were looked upon as two forlorn fools, subjects of profound pity. We had no encouragement from a single individual in town. The Morning Record came out with a heading "Brains and Beer." When we applied to the selectmen to approve the location of our tracks we were held up. Two of these men were George L. Ellsbree and the late C. C. Kinne. The Consolidated Road rushed a survey and at the same time asked the selectmen to give them preference. Ties and rails were waiting the minute this was granted to block our construction. We secured an injunction against both the selectmen and the railroad. It was just at election time. I used the fact that Ellsbree and Kinne were tools of the Consolidated Road. They were defeated. The new selectmen approved our layout. The late Judge James P. Platt as town counsel gave his written opinion that we were within our rights, and that the Consolidated Road did not have any right.

## TURNED DOWN COLD BY LOCAL BANKS

Trouble followed in Southington. There was a short electric road already in existence, simply an apology for what it ought to be. The selectmen approved our layout. Town meetings were called to oppose. Finally

we bought the rails and equipment of the old road and gave the town a bond of $1,000 to be forfeited in one year if we did not build. These delays took from August, 1897, to the middle of March, 1898. Then came the letting of contracts and raising of capital. The banks of Meriden cold-bloodedly turned us down. Not a dollar would they lend. Junius S. Norton was then cashier of the Home National bank. As an excuse for not letting us have any money he said there was a stage coach running between Meriden and Southington carrying a passenger a day! How could we expect to make an electric road pay? I promptly told him it was none of his business; we did not need any conservators over us, and furthermore when the road was built I would organize another bank. Mr. Norton lived to realize that the promise was fulfilled.

## ROAD WAS QUICKLY BUILT

The road was completed from Crow Hollow to Southington center, a distance of nine miles, including the construction of a power house, installing boilers and machinery, and the erection of eight large and small bridges, in seventy-two working days. John M. Hall was president of the Consolidated Road at this time. For a man occupying such a high position he did many small things. One was not to allow our company to connect a switch track we had laid to the steam road's rails, putting us to an expense of sixty cents a ton to cart coal. Our cars used to come into Crow Hollow just in time to see the Meriden street cars departing, causing our passengers to wait fifteen minutes. There was no redress. Hall was bent on vengeance because we had the temerity to build an electric road without

his permission. The railroad commissioners were under the railroad's control, simply existing as tools.

## CONSOLIDATED CAME TO TIME

However there came a way to bring Hall to time. When the next legislature came into existence the late William J. Clark, who had formerly lived in Southington but then was in Stony Creek, suggested that a bill be introduced making the railroads charge for freight pro-rata per ton, per mile, in the state. This worked out to its purpose. It was introduced and had gained considerable support. Hall suspected the design. He invited me to call at his office, which I did. He proposed a contract to let the Southington cars come into Meriden over his company's rails, also to connect up our switch track. The details were worked out, contract drawn, we each signed as president of our respective companies. We shook hands. I started for the door. Hall wheeled around in his chair and said in a snappish tone, "I suppose now you will drop that short haul game?" It is unnecessary to state that interest did lanquish after that.

## FOUR INSTEAD OF TWO DIVIDE PROFITS

Outside of what Mr. Hurley and I invested not a dollar of Meriden money was put into this electric road enterprise. Outside banks did not look upon Mr. Hurley and I as an absurd risk but loaned liberally the sum of $200,000 desired and so with an extended credit for rails, ties and supplies the road was completed. The sequel to our not being able to borrow at home was we had to take in two other partners. When the road was

finally sold at a profit of $160,000 it was cut in four quarters instead of two halves. I have told about this railroad deal to confirm the fact of indifference in local affairs and especially what has since proved a great benefit to the public. I know many, to have proved their wisdom that an electric road to Southington was a fool proposition, would have been happy had it resulted in failure and we had gone bankrupt.

## MR. HOLT'S LITTLE JOKE

I had yards of experience in borrowing or trying to borrow money for the various enterprises I was interested in from Meriden banks. Once I applied to the Home National bank for a loan of $5,000. Two of the directors at that time were the late Edward Miller, Sr. and Irving L. Holt. The matter came before the board. Mr. Miller asked Mr. Holt what he thought the money was wanted for. Mr. Holt, with a serious look, answered probably to play poker with. Mr. Miller said the bank could not lend money for any such purpose. Mr. Holt replied, "Why, yes we can if the man wins."

## PERMISSION TO WITHDRAW REQUEST

On another occasion not so long ago I promised financial support to some young men who wished to enlarge their already growing business. I went before the board of directors of a certain local bank. I told them I was born of poor but honest parents, had so far met my obligations, and would they please be so kind if I endorsed the note of my young friends to discount it? They didn't throw me outdoors. Nothing rude. Just postponed the matter and some days later

the president sympathetically told me the board had given me its kind permission to withdraw my request. When I did not show any surprise he added: "You really did not expect to get the discount did you?" I replied, "No. I simply wanted to find out if business was conducted in the same old way."

## WHY DOESN'T MERIDEN SHOW PROGRESS ?

The question is asked why doesn't Meriden progress like New Britain, Waterbury, Bristol, Torrington and other places. Simply because there is not the co-operative spirit to pull the town out of a rut. There is too much indecision, too much procrastination, hemming and hawing. If a man had a progressive spirit, like I evinced, let him work out the problem, even if it is for the benefit of all, any old way he can. If I had been older and worked with the builders of the town things would have been different.

## HORACE C. WILCOX DID THINGS

Horace C. Wilcox was a board of trade in himself. His companions were Lemuel J. and George R. Curtis, W. W. Lyman and Isaac C. Lewis. When Mr. Wilcox wanted to start something he would call his quartet together. He would tell them what he wanted. It might require $50,000 or $100,000. You take so much Lemuel, George your share is so and so, Lyman and Lewis you take as much more and I will take the balance. Just as often he would back things alone. He bought the land on West Main street from the First National bank to Hanover street. In 1870 he erected Palace block. Later he took over the old Corner church,

HORACE C. WILCOX.
Meriden's Most Foremost Founder.

moved it back, turned it around, built it over and made a theater out of it. Then he put up Wilcox block, which runs from Church street to the Winthrop hotel. Another large block is where the Horton Printing office is located. He did not like the freight rates Meriden was paying. He built the Cromwell railroad. Rates were lowered before he turned a shovel of dirt, but Mr. Wilcox was set in his ways and built just the same. Then he extended the road to Waterbury. It nearly bankrupted his estate. His townspeople were apathetic. They were willing to accept any advantages, but few were willing to share in the loss. Meriden needs an awakening. Ex-Mayor Reilly said it needed a few first class funerals and fires.

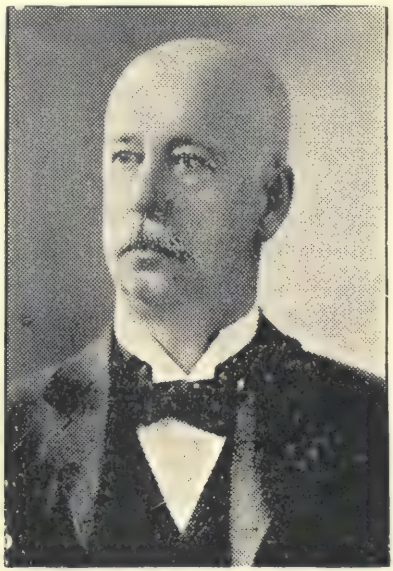
## WHEN MERIDEN WAS SIDE-TRACKED

Soon after Charles S. Mellen was made president of the N. Y., N. H. and Hartford railroad he gave orders to run through Meriden all the express trains that had formerly stopped. This was not done because Meriden was not profitable to these trains. As president of the board of trade I consulted Mr. Mellen but he was firm in his refusal to rescind his order. I told him that if that was his determination we would resort to the courts. He jumped out of his chair and retorted that if we did he would appeal to the Interstate Commerce Commission. I had not considered this solution before, but immediately proceeded to Washington. One of its attorneys was S. W. Briggs, an intimate friend. I stated my mission. He introduced me to Mr. Proutty, a member of the commission from Vermont.

I explained to Mr. Proutty that the trains taken off carried passengers and mail between New York and

LEMUEL J. CURTIS
A Founder of the Meriden Britannia Company.

Boston and they they had served Meriden for thirty or forty years. He said that of course he could not say what his colleagues would do but I could rest assured that I had a good case. He advised before proceeding further that I again see Mr. Mellen and explain that other large railroad systems were doing all they could to prevent any ruling or precedent of small cities



CHARLES S. MELLEN.
Formerly President of Consolidated Road.

having through express trains stopped in their respective places, such as New York to Chicago or St. Louis. Upon my return I did not see Mr. Mellen but I did see Vice-President Todd, who said it was traveling on dangerous ground. He promised us to give us back our

trains. As soon as new time tables could be printed Meriden was put back on the map again and has not been disturbed since.

## RECOMMENDED SITE FOR NEW STATION

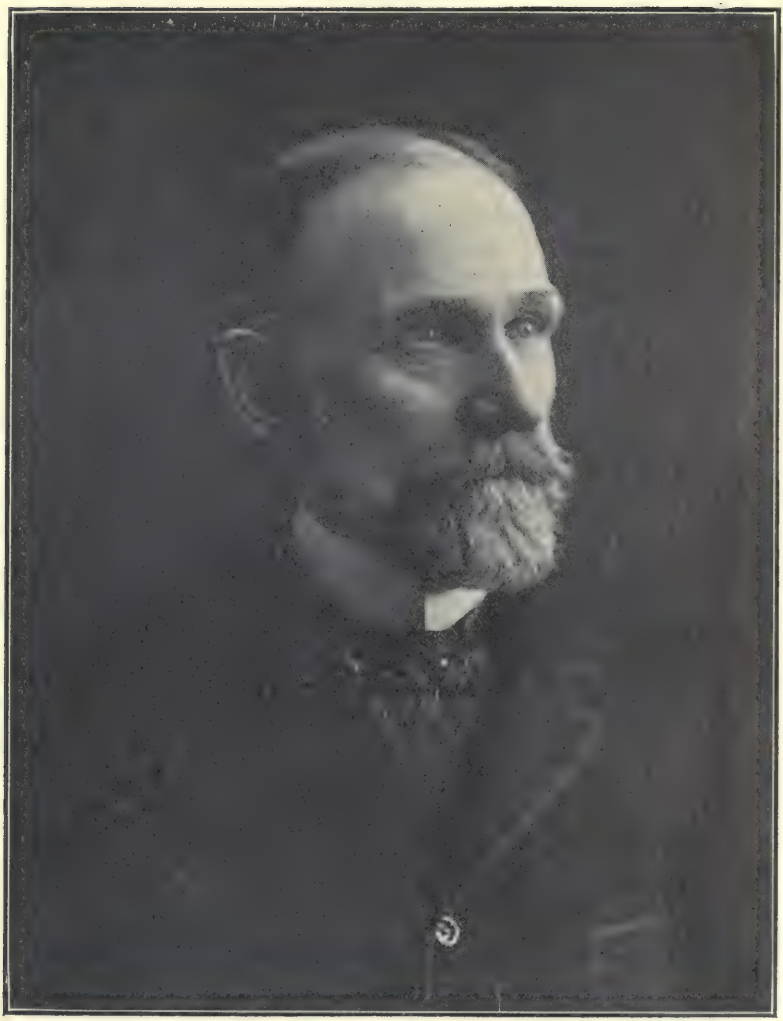
Just before Mr. Mellen's retirement he asked me what could be done regarding a new passenger station for Meriden. He said he expected that the next big undertaking would be the four-tracking of the Hartford division. I recommended that portion of South Colony street between the gas works and Holt hill, where street cars would be convenient on Cook avenue. That the land and houses that would have to be bought would not make the cost excessive. Mr. Mellen sent his engineers to look over the proposition, but as the road's finances were getting in bad shape at this time, the matter was dropped.

## IN MEMORIAM.

On June 20, 1915, I paid the following tribute to an old friend and companion:

"A friendship of forty years and an intimate association of twenty-five years brings to mind the fast fleeting of time. It seems only a short while since my acquaintance with Lew Allen began, yet it was two generations ago, in the fall of 1875. He had just started as a reporter on the old Meriden Recorder, working nights while plying his vocation as a factory hand in the Bradley & Hubbard shop. He was then young, alert, quick of comprehension, and soon developed a genius as a news gatherer, superior at that time to any one in the local field. His ability attracted the attention of the late Alexander Troup of the New Haven Union, who engaged him as Meriden correspondent for that paper. He did his work so thoroguhly that for quite a period the Union had a circulation in Meriden far exceeding that of either the Recorder or the Republican, the two local newspapers which then existed. Subsequently Mr. Allen went to New Haven as reporter, and then city editor of the Union, where his success continued, but retained his residence in Meriden, going to and fro daily.

"The friendship of those early days was mutually



LEWIS ALLEN.

cherished, and to its continuation came the formation of The Journal Publishing company, its members being Mr. Allen, ex-Congressman Thomas L. Reilly, Frank E. Sands and myself. This was in 1886, and on April 17 of that year was commenced the first publication of The Meriden Daily Journal. The association of these gentlemen continued for a quarter of a century, the development of Meriden in the meantime no doubt being greatly due to the energy and enterprise which they exerted as publishers, and to the presentation of facts and conditions as portrayed by the pen of Mr. Allen in the editorial columns of The Journal.

"Lew Allen was a newspaper student. He undoubtedly was better posted on current events than any one else in Meriden. He was an omniverous reader. He was thorough and accurate in his work. His pride was hurt if a single item of news was omitted on the day it occurred. His style was entertaining, yet simple and comprehensive.

"Next to myself he had been longer in the newspaper profession in Meriden than any one else. We both came to this city in its infancy. We knew intimately the founders of its industries, and in our period have seen them one by one pass away. Mr. Allen belonged to the next generation which has arrived at that age which marks the passage of its existence as the toll is exacted from day to day.

"We found Lew Allen a genial and cheerful companion, even so when I visited him at the hospital for the last time, and as such we shall miss him more deeply than words can tell."

# EVENTS IN CUBA.

**Friendship With Old Line Army Officers and Story of Conspirators Who Blew Up the Maine.**

In Havana in 1899 I became well acquainted with General William Ludlow, who with Gen. W. C. Gorgas cleaned the city of its filth and eventually of yellow fever. General Ludlow engaged the services of Colonel Waring of New York, who organized in that city the "white wing" street cleaning gang, to do the same thing for Havana, but in addition to clean out every building in the city. This was thoroughly done, the rubbish of years piled the narrow streets one story high before it was removed. Unsanitary toilets were smashed and new plumbing ordered to replace it. The police were put upon a military footing, thoroughly trained and made an efficient force. Law and order was enforced. Captain John Pitcher was made judge of the police court, using good judgment and tact in his administration of justice.

In fact every municipal department was organized to do efficient work.

Such an overhauling of civil affairs in place of the slip-shod, grafting conduct of the Spaniards who had ruled so long, made General Ludlow much disliked. The Spanish press reviled, ridiculed and abused him. I had not met the general at that time, but I defended

him vigorously in my newspaper. I had a job printing establishment there. About this time I was deluged with government orders, but no explanation was made. Indeed I did not know from what source it originated until returning on the steamer home I was introduced to General Ludlow, who said he had intended to call on me to express his appreciation of my able support. He had, however, ordered the several departments over which he had presided to send my office the work heretofore sent to Spanish printing plants, especially as he had no reason to favor them and felt under obligations to me. I thanked him for his kindness, but told him I did not feel that he should have given me such preference, as I admired his executive abilities, had read of his wonderful work as an eminent army engineer and his high standing, and believed it was my duty to use my pen in his defense as we were Americans in a foreign land and should stick together.

Our friendship was mutual until the general was ordered or transferred to the Philippines. He confided to me that he had been informed that General John R. Brooke, who was then governor general of Cuba, was to be removed, and his reward for his services was to be appointed in Brooke's place. He had set his mind at rest upon this point, but with his transfer came the announcement of the appointment of General Leonard Wood to be governor. He was a particular friend of Theodore Roosevelt, but appointed by President McKinley. Wood, as some will remember, was lifted over the heads of many army officers who were in line of promotion. General Ludlow felt it was a humiliating blow for him and as his death was a matter of a few

months afterwards I have always believed he died of a broken heart.

## STORY OF THE MAINE CONSPIRATORS

I was approached in Havana by a man who represented he was a detective and said he could prove the plot that caused the destrcution of the battleship Maine, whose hulk was about two or three hundred feet off shore. He said that it was done by a submerged bomb fired by an electric battery connected by land with wire attachment. It was the work of five Cubans who had no grievance against the United States but believed its annihilation would cause war to be declared by this country against Spain. He gave me the names of the conspirators, four of whom had gone to other countries for fear of detection. They were afraid of the man who had charge of the battery and had gotten him out of the way by poison. His widow was living a short distance from Havana and would make an affidavit to the fact. This she did, and armed with this document I thought it important enough to present to the then Secretary of War, Elihu Root, going to Washington for that purpose. Mr. Root received me cordially, listened to what I had to say and examined the affidavit. He said it had the essence of truth, but true or not, he did not believe it would be for the best interest of the government to prove its veracity for the United States was stirred up to make war on Spain, believing that country was the instigator of the tragedy that followed the blowing up of the Maine. He would present the matter to President McKinley and if he did not agree with him, would ask me to come to Washington again. However, I was not asked.

## ARRESTED AS A BURGLAR

I was in charge of the goods the Red Cross had stored in Havana to succor the reconcentrado children, some 2,000 we had preserved to be taken over by the Cuban government. Toward the end I undertook to remove what remained of these goods from several buildings where they were placed to cheaper quarters. The Red Cross was in Cuba by invitation of President McKinley, who issued a proclamation placing it under the protection of the army. Four-horse trucks were assigned us to do the removal. The buildings were all emptied except one, which was securely locked. By climbing a ladder I discovered it was full of Red Cross material. I ordered the door broken open. We had just loaded one big wagon when I noticed five policemen approaching. I scented danger and told the driver, a powerful negro, not to comprehend anything they might say (it was all Spanish) but to crack his whip and send his mules flying. He did as he was told to the surprise of the police. They said they had come to arrest my party and self. We were charged with burglary, must go to the precinct and make answer, which if not satisfactory, we would be taken to the "vevac," the main police station and be locked up for the night. I demanded first that they give us a guard for our goods so they would not be stolen. I also sent for an army officer to get us out of our trouble, as I did not relish being locked up in a loathsome, vermin cell. We had to rely on our own resources, however, and were kept in the prison ante room until ten o'clock that night before we secured a temporary release.

The next day I asked General Brooke, the Cuban governor, to place a military guard over our goods as

I had no faith in the Cuban police. Brooke refused, saying the army was there to pacify, not to excite the people. Finally, when he would not listen to further argument, I told the general that his course no doubt would make him an accomplice in having the goods stolen as the instigator of our arrest had probably planned. It took the court seven weeks to decide we were innocent, but in the meantime the police had been taken off and the goods were gone.

General Brooke was an old line army officer. His conception of civil affairs was to conduct them as his military training had taught him. When I told him he could not govern the country by army tactics he became very indignant and said that I could not talk that way in his office. I told him as the Red Cross people were there by orders of the President and under his protection that we should respectfully maintain our right of appeal to him, but would go to the secretary of war if necessary. His bump of vanity was large, he never had a good word for any of his colleagues, and on several occasions "called" me down for praising some of the generals I had become acquainted with.

## ARMY OFFICERS LIVED LIKE PRINCES

The army officers during the occupation of Cuba had all the creature comforts the country afforded. They had smart equipages drawn by two horses, rented palatial residences, some of which were furnished at government expense. They generally dressed in immaculate white, with gold buttons and chevrons, and driven in their low phaeton-like carriages, were the envy of the populace. The governor-general lived in

what was termed the "Palace," which was his official residence and office, the running expenses being defrayed by the government.

## GENERAL CHAFFEE ON HIS JOB

General Adna R. Chaffee, who was no stranger to Meriden, held an auditing position. He was one of the

GENERAL ADNA R. CHAFFEE.

most scrupulous and honest officials in Cuba. One day I presented quite a large invoice for school printing, ordered and O. K.'d by the school superintendent. Then I took it to General Chaffee for his signature. After looking it over the general turned his piercing eyes upon me and in a stern voice asked how much I would

charge for the same work in the United States. I told him probably it would be one-half cheaper. Then, why not here? I told him he might work for the same pay in a yellow fever infected district but I did not have to. Two of my employes had been attacked with the dread disease and only one survived, the hospital and funeral

GENERAL HUGH L. SCOTT.

expenses were a charge the government would have to bear in increased costs. His parting words were, "Don't let these high prices happen again."

## GENERAL HUGH L. SCOTT

I found Major Hugh L. Scott, who was quartermaster on General Ludlow's staff and subsequently one of our

leading generals, of a different temperament. He said it was worth a good premium on job work to sustain an up-to-date American paper, say nothing of the disagreeable heat and danger of scourge, that a publisher was up against in that climate. General Scott left Havana

GENERAL TASKER H. BLISS.

to join General Ludlow in the Philippines at the same time I sold out in Havana to return home. He was every inch the soldier, broad-minded and a man of ability.

## GENERAL BLISS' ORDERS FAILED

Colonel Tasker H. Bliss was in charge of customs. When I was told I had a large shipment of printing ma-

chinery on board an incoming steamer I applied to the colonel for a letter to those in charge to facilitate its unloading. I supposed this was all I needed to get a prompt delivery. Day after day went by but no machinery. Demanding to know the cause I was told my shipment had been loaded in a lighter or small boat and as some of the invoice was missing it was being held until it was found. Colonel Bliss gave peremptory orders to put my freight on the dock. Still it delayed. Finally a friend advised me to see a custom broker. He said if I would give him $25 he would have the goods in my office before the day was over. I parted with the money. The effect was magic. Money was more powerful than the head of the custom house. The Spaniards had been thoroughly corrupt in this department and I do not believe even today that corruption has been lessened any. Colonel Bliss is now General Bliss, retired; both he and General Scott were in charge during our little conflict with Mexico.

## EXPERIENCE WITH GENERAL WOOD

I had occasion to have considerable business with General Leonard Wood after he became governor-general of Cuba. Coming upon the heels of General Ludlow's transfer to the Philippines, after Ludlow had thoroughly cleaned up Havana besides putting its departments on a business basis, General Wood is generally given credit for having performed the work himself. He has has too magnanimous a nature to make any such claim and would be first to give credit to his predecessor if the report came to his ears. General Wood did clean up the section including Santiago. He was very democratic in his manners and often prefaced his

remarks, "Dammit, you know different, Atwater." A New York friend of General Wood inadvertently came to Havana with another man's wife. My paper reported the incident. The reporter the next day met the irate victim in Wood's office and without warning was knocked down. Wood, too, was indignant at the publication. I was about to take the steamer in New York for Havana, but received a cable to visit the man's wife

GENERAL LEONARD WOOD.

in New York. She furnished me what proof I needed, including the picture of her husband. Upon my arrival I called upon General Wood. He told me it was an outrage to publish such a story and that no doubt his friend would sue me for libel. I informed the general if I could find this man I would give him double cause

to get damages for I would knock him down on sight and print the truth about him. The scoundrel, with his lady friend, had taken a steamer just previous to my arrival. When he learned the true story Wood was mad to find out he had been imposed upon.

The general had many fine qualities and as a friend he was an out and out champion. The night before I sold out I spent the evening with him. He asked me to hold on, that Havana needed such a newspaper as I was printing, and that while he asked for no favor the American government should be defended from the constant charge that it had intervened in Cuban affairs only to annex the island to its own territory. He promised if I would stay that he would see that I had enough government patronage to really amount to a subsidy. However, the lure of home and the trials of trying to overcome the "manyana" or to-morrow habit of the people, led me to listen to a satisfactory offer to sell, which I accepted. Having closed up the Red Cross affairs when our 2,000 orphans were confided to government care, I breathed a sigh of relief, bid my friends farewell, and took the steamer home.

# MERIDEN MEN OF MARK.

**Several Mentioned Have Honorable Records of Over Fifty Years in Meriden.**

The men of mark who originally put Meriden on the map, we might mention first Charles Parker, who had factories scattered all over the town, including the gun shop which was a busy bee hive during the Civil war. Next, was the Foster, Merriam Company whose foundry took a modest part. Then came the sterling men of the Meriden Britannia Company, H. C. Wilcox, I. C. Lewis, George R. Curtis, L. J. Curtis and W. W. Lyman. The Bradley & Hubbard Manufacturing Company, Nathaniel L. Bradley and Walter Hubbard. The E. Miller & Company, Edward Miller. These were the active founders of the hustling industries destined to make the town of considerable importance in the manufacturing world. They were important also in the young life of the city, three having served as mayors. Their benefactions covered several hundred thousands of dollars, the most prominent being the Curtis Home for Old Ladies, the Curtis Memorial Library and Hubbard Park.

Among one of the bravest soldiers of the Civil war who distinguished himself was Colonel Charles L. Upham. He is the sole survivor of the original Ives, Upham & Rand company. He and Mr. Rand were clerks in the dry goods store of John Ives before the

COLONEL C. L. UPHAM.

war and after their return formed the partnership under which this successful establishment is known to-day. Colonel Upham was one of Meriden's early mayors and has always been deeply interested in public affairs. He was the first president of Meriden's board of trade. Eli C. Birdsey was the first secretary.

## MERIDEN'S OLD TIME LAWYERS

Of professional men there are few of the old school left. Of the lawyers there is E. A. Merriman, formerly

PATRICK T. O'BRIEN.

for years judge of probate, and Frank S. Fay, formerly and for many years judge of the city and police courts.

There is also Henry S. Dryhurst, who has continually enjoyed the benefit of a political plum, sometimes being postmaster, deputy sheriff, prosecutor in the police court, but never very demonstrative, but always sawing wood for Henry.

There was P. T. O'Brien. When the Democrats never had a look in for the office of judge of probate P. T. was always nominated. When he assisted me in bring-

C. J. DANAHER.

ing the tax dodgers to terms, because he did his duty and made a few enemies, then the party cowardly turned him down. P. T. O'Brien was one of Meriden's most able lawyers.

Then there is George A. Clark. George used to write for the Journal. He is quite humorous. In those days

there was quite a coterie who met in the back office of Lyon & Billard every week. He called it the Saturday Night club, and his descriptions of the meetings were very interesting. In the last few years George has been stuffing his cranium with Blackstone logic, looks

PROBATE JUDGE GEORGE A. CLARK.

wise and quite serious. Across the street are the Danaher brothers. Connie was our office boy, before he gained fame as the champion of the compensation act. If we sent him on an errand, he invariably took a book along, and while he was supposed to return promptly there was a possibility he might do it, provided he had only a few pages to peruse, otherwise he would generally be too late to be of any use. I am sure he is a better lawyer than he was a printer's devil.

# HON. H. WALES LINES.

**In His Eighty-fifth Year, Yet He Is Meriden's Most Foremost Citizen.**

The most loyal and persistent boomer, who has kept at it for more than sixty years, is Hon. H. Wales Lines. I believe now in his eighty-fifth year he has more public spirit than any one in Meriden. He certainly has a commanding character. Mr. Lines has always been the head of the H. Wales Lines company and this company no doubt has erected more substantial structures for colleges, churches, libraries, homes, stores and shops than any other Connecticut competitor. It has not confined its activities to this state, but its monuments of good building can be found in many others. Men much younger than Mr. Lines is or was when they became his assistants, I should say a score, have died in service and I know of none that are now with him that have a record of a score of years. Yet Mr. Lines generally is at his office every day.

I could write a book about Mr. Lines. I have not always agreed with him but we have always been friendly. Mr. Lines has a big bump of stubbornness in his make-up, which I believe has been a poor asset. I reminded him one day he had Atwater blood in his veins. He replied that was true, but that I did not have any Lines blood in mine. Perhaps the fact was to

my advantage as while the Atwater blood is somewhat stubborn, it may be the Atwater-Lines combination added to its force. But casting aside this one defect Mr. Lines has been a loyal citizen and had he the resources of some of our rich men I know he would have unselfishly used them to the best advantage of the town. I never knew him to throw cold water on any project, nor remain indifferent if he could be of service. He bolstered up for years the Meriden Machine Tool company and lent a helping hand to many people struggling along. In the big government bond drives to keep Meriden's ratio in line Mr. Lines' name and efforts were foremost.

If I remember correctly Mr. Lines told me he laid bricks when the Meriden House was erected which I should say was over sixty years ago. His first partner was Charles Perkins, the firm being Perkins & Lines. They had their office where the Journal office now stands. From my first negotiations with Mr. Lines until he finally sold this property the period was twenty-one years. His company has generally been the contractor when I have had any buildings to erect. I have not felt it incumbent to watch out for defective workmanship or cheapening the job to make a larger profit, and have always been given honorable treatment.

Mr. Lines is a unique figure. His striking characteristic has been his broad brimmed hat which he has invariably worn since I knew him. When I inquired the reason for the style of hat worn by him, he said he served a regular apprenticeship as mason, bricklayer and plasterer; and when nineteen years of age both his eyes were accidentally filled with soft, hard-finish ma-

HON. H. WALES LINES.
Meriden's Grand Old Man.

MRS. H. WALES LINES.

terial which severely burned them. For several months it was necessary to shade his eyes when he was in a strong light. A friend loaned him a soft, wide-brimmed hat which he found very comfortable and helpful. Some slight changes developed the comfortable style of hat which is familiar to his friends. Like Eli C. Birdsey, Mr. Lines is a thirty-third degree Mason and is grand treasurer of the Grand Encampment of the Knights Templar, covering the whole country, a position he has held many years. He was mayor for several terms, state senator and would have been representative to congress but failed of election. When the town hall was built he was literally the committee, architect and builder. I secured an injunction against the auditorium being erected, but by diplomatic work Mr. Lines lined up the labor unions and others who wildly voted him the town treasury to fight the case so I withdrew it as I nad only my own resources to rely upon. I believed then it was an adjunct wholly unnecessary, and have had no reason to change my mind since. Life is too short to harbor animosity or grievances, and so far as I am concerned I long ago found it did not pay. My greeting to Mr. Lines is that he may continue to prosper, and that I shall hail him as Meriden's grand old man.

Mr. and Mrs. Lines were married June 23, 1861. They celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary in 1921, both at that time enjoying good health, and upon that occasion were visited by many friends to congratulate them on their unusual domestic longevity.

ATWATER-LINES ANCESTRY.

David Atwater, who settled in New Haven, Conn., in 1638, and was the first signer of the planters' agreement, married Damaris, dau. of Thomas Sayre of Southampton, L. I. His son John, m.

Sept. 13, 1682, Abigail Mansfield, and settled in Wallingford. He was called "Weaver." He also had a son John who m. Aug. 4, 1713, Elizabeth Mix. They lived in Cheshire. They had a son Stephen who m. Feb. 22, 1744, Hannah, dau. of Deacon Stephen Hotchkiss. Their dau. Naomi m. June 1, 1780, Enos Bunnell. All of Cheshire. Their son William, m. Clarissa Stevens, whose dau. Harriet, b. Dec. 11, 1817, d. Feb. 24, 1898; m. June 2, 1835, Henry Willis Lines, b. Dec. 5, 1812. Their son, H. Wales Lines, b. June 3, 1838, m. June 23, 1861, Sarah Congdon Munger. Their children were:

Harriet Louisa, b. Jan. 3, 1863; m. May 6, 1886. Robt. L. Peck, He d. Sept. 26, 1902.
- Norman Van Nearing, b. Dec. 24, 1887.
- Frederick Lines, b. May 12, 1891.
- Amy Langdon, b. Nov. 18, 1897.

Henry Washington, b. June 5, 1864; d. in infancy Oct. 1864.

Sarah Lavina, b. Sept. 18, 1865; m. Jan. 7, 1886, Frank Hamilton.
- Maude Lines, b. Nov. 3, 1886.
- Lorenzo, b. June 24, 1895.

Clarissa Belle, b. July 13, 1867; m. Nov. 2, 1888, Roger B. deBussy.
- Beatrice, b. Aug. 15, 1889.
- Wales Lines, b. Feb. 3, 1890.

Ellie Munger, b. Feb. 20, 1871; m. Mar. 24, 1891, Frank M. Chapin.
- Catherine Lines, b. July 10, 1892.

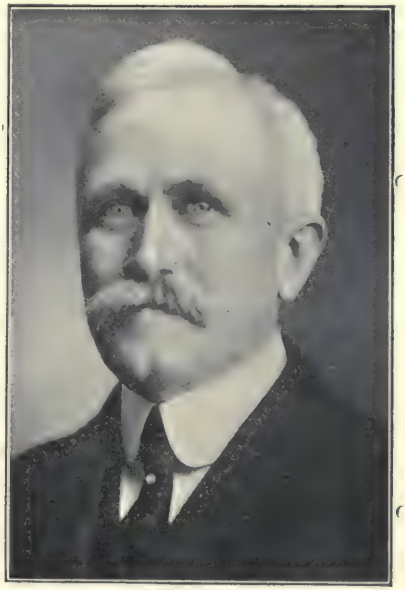
## DOCTORS WHO HAVE SERVED LONG

Of the doctors John Tait, now living in Washington, comes to town nearly every year. He is ninety-five years young. The first I knew of Dr. Tait was a hard fought legal battle when the city undertook to straighten out East Main street. I have forgotten who

DR. JOHN TAIT.

got the best of it, probably if there was any money in it, it was the lawyers. There is only one other veteran and that is Dr. E. T. Bradstreet. The oldest inhabitant has forgotten when he came to town. Having always been in good humor the doctor really looks young. Unlike Dr. Tait who admits his age, Dr. Bradstreet

says nothing. There was an old gentleman, then over 70 years old, named Sweet, who drove a grocery wagon. He was as spry and nimble as could be. I proposed to print his picture in the Journal. He plead if his employer knew he was seventy years old he would fire him. Dr. Bradstreet has a host of patients and if they do not



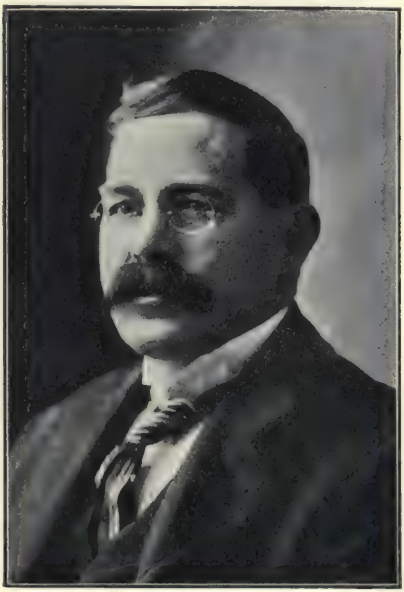
DR. E. T. BRADSTREET.

discover how long he has been in the game he may retain them. The doctor displays his true genius as an after dinner speaker and presiding officer. Most of these kind of men generally get off all the old "chestnuts" that a suffering audience will stand for. Not so with the doctor. He has been known to spring some

DR. J. D. EGGLESTON.

originals. The doctor jokingly tells about some well to do relatives of his own and on his wife's side who gave their property to others because the doctor had such a lucrative practice he did not need it, while his wife would be taken care of by others, and so they were not left anything.

Dr. J. D. Eggleston, who is not far behind in the veteran class, has had the opposite kind of luck. When



DR. E. W. SMITH.

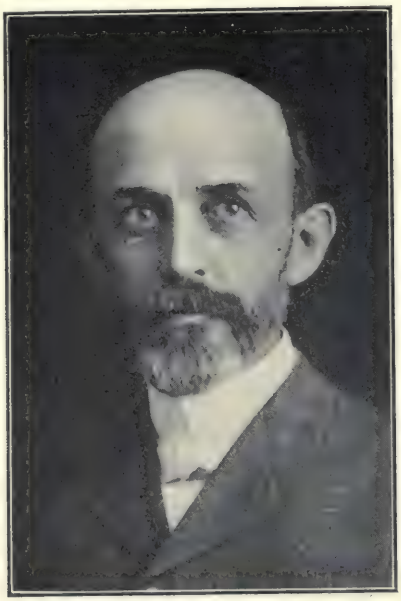
relative after relative of the doctor and his wife died we were told how handsomely they were remembered. Both doctors have led busy lives, have given gener-

ously of their time to the local hospital, have been generous to their patients, and have filled many offices of public trust. Dr. Bradstreet has been coroner for this district for many years. Dr. Eggleston is a trustee of the Connecticut School for Boys, and is a director in the Home National bank.

DR. J. A. COOKE.

There is also Dr. Edward W. Smith. He has proved himself an expert surgeon. He was a college mate of ex-President Taft. There is no more popular doctor in Meriden.

Two of the leading doctors who located here subsequently were Dr. F. P. Griswold and Dr. J. A. Cooke, the latter serving as mayor for two years. Also, Dr. Samuel D. Otis.



DR. F. P. GRISWOLD.

## CHARLES F. LINSLEY'S LONG CAREER

If you should ask for the most methodical, level-headed man in Meriden I should point to Charles F. Linsley, who has been the managing head of the large Bradley & Hubbard Manufacturing company half of a century. Mr. Linsley has generally been at his desk promptly at 7 o'clock every morning during this time; has had but few vacations and little illness. He has

CHARLES F. LINSLEY.

witnessed the growth of the concern from a small affair to thousands of feet in buildings four stories high. N. L. Bradley, the former head of the concern, told me when Mr. Linsley was first engaged his partner, Mr. Hubbard, was stubbornly opposed, as it was an added and unnecessary expense. Mr. Linsley at that time was employed in the office of the Wilcox Silver Plate company. Mr. Bradley said on this occasion he was as stubborn as Mr. Hubbard, who finally acquiesced. Mr. Bradley concluded: "Now, Mr. Atwater, you know Mr. Linsley. Did I do right or did I do wrong?" I promptly answered in the affirmative. Mr. Linsley was a soldier in the Civil war and was for years a valued member of the board of apportionment and taxation. He is one of the dominating directors of the First National bank.

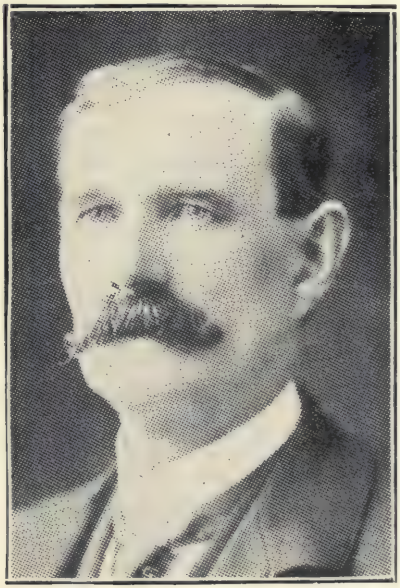
## SOME OF THOSE WHO DID GOOD DEEDS

The late L. C. Brown, the veteran grocer, came from Canton, this state, in 1866. He was first in the bottling business, corner of Camp and Pratt streets. Then he started in business where the Koeller saloon was located on Main street. He had several locations, not far from the "Corner." At one time he was associated with Dwight Hugins. He also had a fish market in the Morse & Cook block, managed by John H. Preston. Mr. Brown's sons have succeeded their father in the grocery business.

The late Waldo C. Twiss, who lived on Broad street, was a builder and moving contractor some years ago. He was born in Canada and had lived in Meriden since he was seven years old.

## AN UNOSTENTATIOUS CITIZEN

One of the most unostentatious and quiet of Meriden's substantial citizens is Cornelius W. Cahill. He was in the retail and wholesale meat business until he

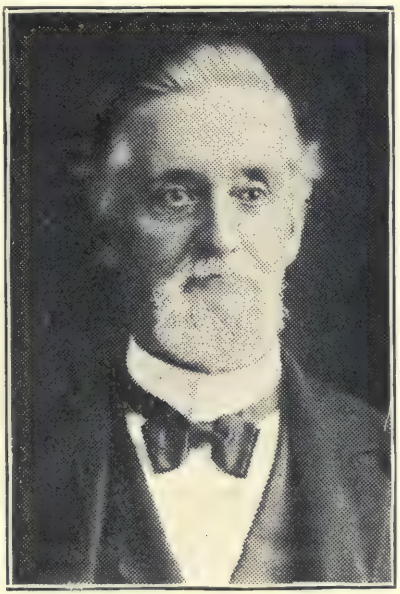


CORNELIUS W. CAHILL.

retired a few years ago. He has done much to make Main street attractive as the owner of several buildings there and on Pratt street. He is practically the owner of the Poli theater. Mr. Cahill has long been a director in the First National bank.

The late William H. Catlin, whose father was Dr. B. H. Catlin, who was one of the old practitioners in Meri-

den, lived where he died since he was a boy. He remembered as far back as when he went in swimming where Grant's tea store is now located, corner of State and Main streets. Mr. Catlin, for many years was treasurer of the Meriden Savings Bank and a soldier in the Civil war. He was well posted on local history.



WALDO C. TWISS.

James A. Cook kept a livery stable, corner of East Main and Crown streets. In his early days he was a joiner. He and Joseph Morse erected the Morse & Cook block and with James A. Curtis the Curtis & Cook block on West Main street. He did considerable in his lifetime to improve Meriden.

George A. Parker, who lives on the corner of Crown and Gold streets, now between ninety-seven and one hundred years old, was formerly a livery stable owner.

GEORGE A. PARKER.

Mr. Parker is still quite active. He was a gun maker in his younger days. With his son he erected Parker block on West Main street.

## JOEL H. GUY

One of Meriden's first bankers was Joel H. Guy. He was a prince in holding onto money and certainly counted his pennies. He was married a second time to a very estimable Bridgeport widow, Mrs. Amy Weth-

erell. It was the extravagant time of his life. The ceremony took place in Bridgeport. Quite a number of Meriden people were present, including myself as a cub reporter. The old gentleman told me a short while afterward that he was much pleased with the writeup. He had given another reporter $5 and had expected to do the same thing by me, but the Recorder had said so many mean things afterward that he should withhold the $5. There was one story current about him that may have been true. He expected four to lunch one day. In anticipation of the event he bought a pound of steak. A fifth showed up. Mr. Guy took the steak back to the market and asked for another one to weigh a pound and a quarter. Mr. Guy was tall and thin and wore a high collar, or perhaps it was an old fashioned stock. He looked every bit the miser.

He was nominated for state senator shortly after his second marriage and to please his wife I believe he was ambitious to be elected. The night of his nomination he came to the Recorder office and told me he did not seek it, but now that it had taken place he wanted to be elected. "Tell Mr. Riggs anything I can do for him I will be pleased to do." Wages were not paid very promptly those days and often dragged along until quite a sum had accumulated. Riggs owed me over $500. After Mr. Guy's visit I dunned him for the full amount, and if he could not pay in cash to give me a six months' note, which was given. Then I saw Mr. Guy and told him if he wanted to do something for Mr. Riggs he could endorse his note for $500. He did so. I never knew to the contrary but presumed he had it to pay. At any rate the $5 I didnt' get increased one-

hundred fold when paid. Everything was fair in politics those days.

Mr. Guy accumulated considerable property on West Main street, at least one-half coming into my possession within the last three years. Upon it he built what was in its day probably the most handsome house in

N. F. GRISWOLD.

town. That was sixty years ago. It was moved to another foundation a short distance a few months ago. It was practically in as sound condition as when first built.

## ONE OF MERIDEN'S FORTY-NINERS

One of the first stove merchants was the late N. F. Griswold, who founded the Griswold, Richmond & Glock company. Mr. Griswold was short, thick set,

stooped shoulders. He was the last of the California gold seekers who went there during the craze of 1849. He was a genial, good souled man, but shocked the community by his out and out atheist ideas. He was a great admirer of "Bob" Ingersoll and never

J. A. V. THOMAS.

missed an opportunity to hear him lecture. Though Mr. Griswold, Mr. Richmond and the senior Mr. Glock have passed on, the business is carried on by the Glock boys on West Main street.

## MERIDEN'S VETERAN GUN MAKER

Another old gun maker, and I think Dr. Rust worked for him, is John A. V. Thomas. John has a long name,

and I suppose for that reason wears long whiskers. He is the veteran dealer in sporting goods. When over eighty years old he rode down Colony street on his bicycle, his whiskers flowing behind him. If I should tell you the number of times his store has been robbed you would say I was lying. John has a bigger vocabulary of cuss words than the dictionary contains.

## THE OLD BRADLEY TROTTING PARK

Frank P. Evarts, who has charge of the Bradley estate over west, is an old G. A. R. veteran. He was at one time a foreman or superintendent in the Bradley & Hubbard plant. The property he is in charge of was the homestead of William L. Bradley, a brother of the late N. L. Bradley. Part of it was Meriden's only trotting park when I came to town. The owner shortly afterward moved to Boston where he accumulated a large fortune. In those early days the town could boast of some fast steppers and there were many spirited races pulled off over there. In winter time Colony street was a sleighing boulevard where not only fine horses trotted up and down but there were many elegant sleighs on exhibition, with beautiful tingling bells, warm buffalo robes, and a friendly rivalry as to who had the best turnout. Those were good old days. The horse has been superseded and while the mechanical automobile may be more comfortable and speedy, for genuine sport give me the old "one-hoss shay." When could any young couple be happier than those moonlight spins over the country roads or a crowd in a straw-bottomed sled to a neighboring town for a supper, dancing, and the midnight return?

Mr. Bradley accumulated over 200 acres, of which his

trotting park was a part. Each year, besides the races held there, was conducted successfully a country fair. The marks of the old race track over which noted races were run are still discernable in some sections. The sons, Peter B. and Robert S., some years ago plotted off considerable of the territory, laid out desirable streets, including a boulevard, and some of the most beautiful homes have been built there. Mr. Bradley, in 1861, saw the future possibilities of chemical fertilizers and was the first in this country to make a success of that industry. He erected a fine residence in what is now Bradley boulevard section, the ownership of which was retained in his estate until recently. Mr. Bradley was descended from the Atwaters on the maternal side, his mother being Abigail Abby Atwater, daughter of Samuel Atwater, who was a revolutionary soldier. His father was Levi Bradley, born and raised in Cheshire, Conn., where he managed a large farm, afterward moving to Meriden.

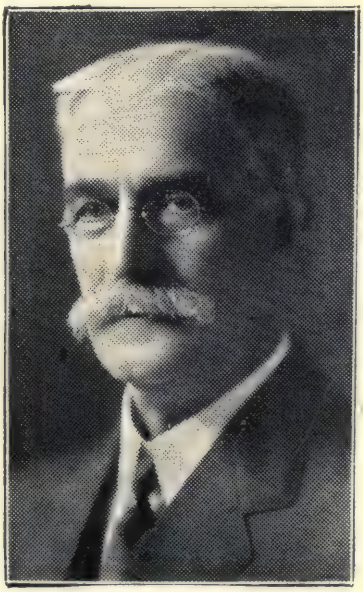
## FISH DEALER MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS

I do not know what Meriden will do when John H. Preston refuses to sell fish and other sea foods. It took him a good many years and the loss of thousands of dollars to get up courage to drop the delivery by teams. Horses would die and wagons would go to ruin so quick that the profits were all absorbed. I remember Mr. Preston when he sold oysters in the Rogers block, and that was some years ago. If you should search the country over you would not find a man better adapted to the business nor a cleaner market. People buy fish just the same if they do have to come and get it.

JOHN H. PRESTON.

## PULLING AND FILLING TEETH SIXTY YEARS

The first tooth I had pulled was in 1866. Dr. T. S. Rust used the forceps. He has been hammering in gold and extracting teeth ever since. He has not been in the same location all this time. During the Civil war he was a gun maker. He has quite a machine shop in the

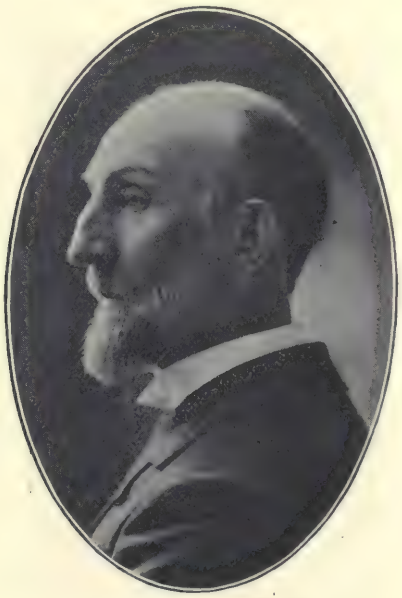


DR. T. S. RUST.

basement of his house and his ability as a machinist is unquestioned. I became well acquainted with the doctor when we took a three weeks' cruise in the West Indies.

## THE LATE FRANK J. WHEELER

It is surprising how many men were in business or followed professional careers for fifty years or over. One man who was in the same location and the same line of business was the late F. J. Wheeler on West Main street. He located there in 1862. He had many



FRANK J. WHEELER.

opportunities to sell his business and his real estate. Mr. Wheeler had an accumulation of merchandise, probably much more than he knew of. When someone suggested to him that he take an inventory he answered, "What do I want to do that for? Don't I own everything and isn't it all paid for?" From what I knew of

Mr. Wheeler I do not believe there were many nights when he put his head on his pillow that he owed a dollar. Several years ago, it is said, when some labor delegates called uopn him and intimated if he should continue to sell some goods that were upon their unfair list they would have to trade elsewhere, Mr. Wheeler replied he hoped they would. He had a lot of dead beats just like them on his books. That was all the satisfaction they got. One day I asked Mr. Wheeler if I could borrow a building jack. He said yes. I would find it downstairs. I brought it up and as I was about to pass out, I said, "Mr. Wheeler, I will return this as soon as I am through." He answered by saying: "Set that jack down." I did so. He continued: "When you are through with it, telephone me and I will send after it." I picked up the jack and said, "all right." I telephoned him as I agreed. "Thank you," he said, "I now know where it is." Mr. Wheeler had many peculiarities, but a more straightforward man it would be hard to find.

## ONE OF MERIDEN'S HIGH MASONIC OFFICIALS

The well known gentleman who owns the old colonial mansion, corner East Main and Broad streets, is Eli Coe Birdsey. He was born there. Opposite stood the old tavern which had a dance hall. It was an old-time hostelry and dispensed Jamaica rum and native made cider brandy. Here the old stage coach pulled up and with the crack of a whip the four horses drawing it were off with a gallop to New York or Boston, whatever direction it might be going, for Broad street was the old post road between these two large cities. Some of our old sober-minded citizens used to congregate in the old bar room and for those days were real sports. Mr.

ELI COE BIRDSEY.

Birdsey's mother thought it was an awful wicked place. At any rate he was forbidden to go on that side of the street. Mr. Birdsey has seen that whole section changed. Many of the old buildings have been torn down, Mr. Birdsey himself demolishing the old store that stood on the corner in which his father had run a country store. I owned the property where the old tavern stood and was a neighbor for twenty years. I was never able to return the many favors Mr. Birdsey did for myself and family. Cherries, pears, apples, and such an abundance of grapes as graced our table from his vineyard, and the neighborly errands performed with cheerfulness keeps Mr. Birdsey's memory green in my household.

The anniversary of Mr. Birdsey's marriage to Miss Ida Homan the neighbors gave Eli and his bride the surprise of his life. Charles F. Monroe, Mrs. Monroe, Miss Marion Taft, Mrs. Atwater, Miss Annie Beatty and myself made up in a variety of costumes, stepped in after supper. We had previously arranged with Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Pease to call and hold them until we could get made up for it was all impromptu. Charlie Monroe as an old Irish woman with a toothache, Mrs. Monroe and Miss Taft in gentleman's evening dress; Mrs. Atwater as a negress, Aunt Dinah; Miss Beatty just ready for an automobile ride and I as Lew Dockstader, with my brother's evening suit that I could jump into, and face covered with burnt cork, made up a personality that it took Mr. and Mrs. Birdsey some time to penetrate.

Mr. Birdsey was in the hardware business uptown for half a century. First Birdsey and Miles, the late Wallace A. Miles being the partner; Birdsey & Foster,

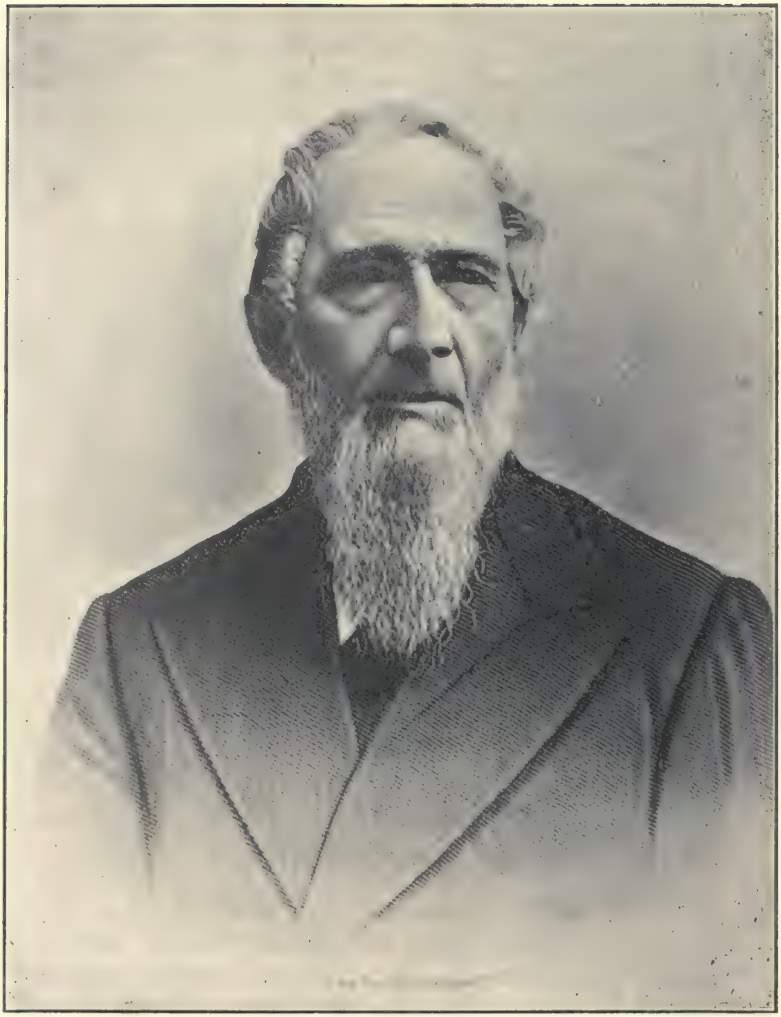
Frank Foster, now deceased, being succeeded by John F. Raven as Birdsey & Raven. Mr. Birdsey's long suit is Masonry. He has travelled more miles to attend Masonic meetings than anybody I know of. He is one of the few in the state that has attained the thirty-third degree. He has been secretary of the State Grand Commandery, Knights Templar, for years. Mr. Birdsey has been very successful in the cultivation of grapes and his friends, myself and family being among the number who like each year to help ourselves to as many as we can stuff and carry home, and then Mr. Birdsey says cordially to come again as long as they last and we not liking to offend him as cordially accept.

## JOHN SUTLIFF

John Sutliff, who was president of the Foster, Merriam Company, and lived to be ninety-five years old, was another Meridenite who counted his pennies long after he had accumulated a competence. Mr. Sutliff worked at the bench until nearly the end. It is said as a workman he drew $1 per day but when he became ninety years old he thought he was not worth so much and cut himself down to ninety cents.

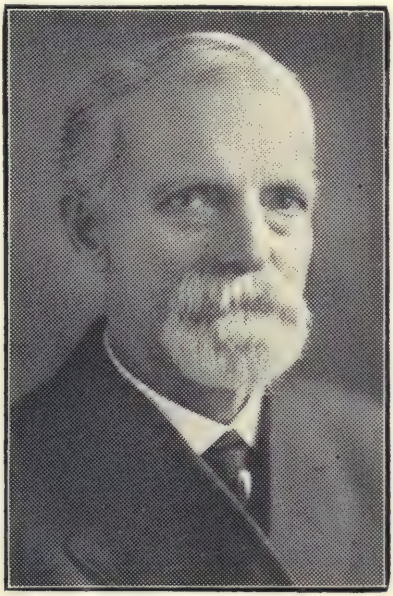
Years before he owned property in Southington which he rented. Once a month he would rise early enough to walk over the mountain and return and be at his bench at 7 a. m.

One day in front of the Journal office Mr. Sutliff was about to board a trolley car to go up to Pleasant street to his son's residence. His hand shook with palsy. Shakingly he raised it to take hold of the railing to pull himself up, when he said to the conductor, "How much does it cost to Pleasant street?" The reply was five



JOHN SUTLIFF.

cents. The hand dropped unsteadily and slowly with the remark that it was the interest on a dollar for a year and he guessed he would walk. Yet it was reported he had accumulated a quarter of a million dollars.



FRANK WHEELER.

## ONE OF THE EARLY PHOTOGRAPHERS

Frank Wheeler, who with his son, conducts a machine shop, is one of Meriden's oldest photographers. He did work for all of the old companies who used to photograph their new designs in place of having their salesmen carry samples. He was located in the Wilcox building over the Griswold, Richmond & Glock store.

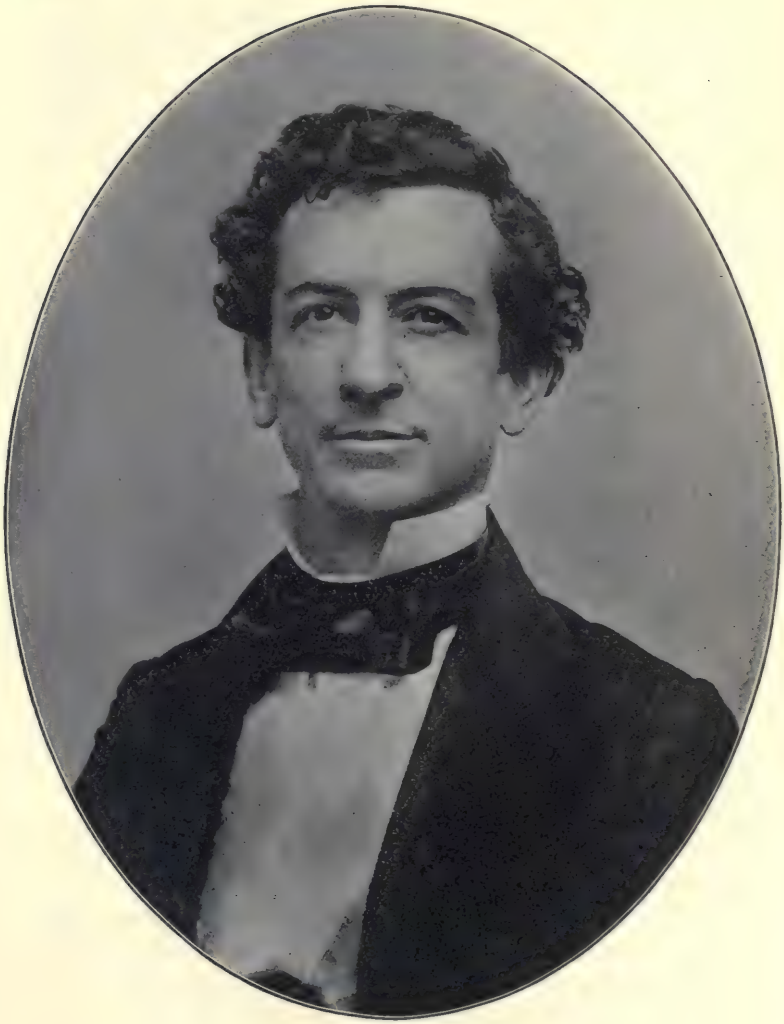
His brother, William W., was employed there for a time but finally went into the same line of business for himself. For years there was plenty of work for both establishments. The photo-gravure and half tone processes of illustration have now practically taken the place of the old line of photographs.

## OWEN B. ARNOLD

Another old banker was Owen B. Arnold. His life was spent in the banking house as much as possible. Mr. Arnold was fully six feet tall and spare of build. He had a high-pitched, squeaky voice. He acquired the property surrounding and the West Peak mountain itself. When Walter Hubbard started to create what is now Hubbard park he wanted to have Mr. Arnold give some land that Hubbard desired. At any rate the two did not agree. Mr. Arnold afterward was determined that his property on West Peak should never get into Mr. Hubbard's possession. When I approached him to buy West Peak for the Southington Electric road Mr. Arnold was quite pleased. He named a price of $10,000 which we agreed to. Mr. Arnold procrastinated in having the deed made out. Time rolled by. I asked often when it would be ready but invariably was told to not be in a hurry it would come in due time. After he died I was told the deed had been made out, signed, but not witnessed.

In anticipation of getting West Peak we had bought thirteen acres underneath it and had planned to build an inclined electric road to its top. Both properties have been included in the park domain.

Mr. Arnold was of the old school, was a bachelor, and at night read his newspaper by the light of a candle



OWEN B. ARNOLD.

up to his demise. He was close with money, but did many charitable acts, and had a great deal of pride in home affairs.

## WHAT DISCOURTESY DID

Mr. Arnold was president of the Meriden National bank, which was organized as the first bank in town and was situated on Broad street. After the down town section grew up the old bank moved to new quarters. George Clark was long its treasurer, and afterwards president. He was not always courteous. Russell Hall was one of the best depositors of the institution. Mr. Hall one day asked Mr. Clark what his balance amounted to. The answer was snapped out, "You ought to know what your own balance is!" Mr. Hall changed his deposit to the Home National bank. Afterward the old bank offered to make him a director which on account of Clark, he refused. Then the Home bank sought him as a director. Because he had refused one he refused the other.

When I asked Mr. Hall to become a director in the Puritan Trust Company he told me of his previous experience. Because he had refused two banks he thought he should refuse the third. I argued this was a new deal and in the first place one could offset the other. He finally yielded. Mr. Hall told me that he loaned most of his surplus money on mortgages and that he had never called a loan. In several instances he was quite provoked when some of his borrowers wanted to pay their indebtedness. He said he did not want to be making changes.

## JOHN D. BILLARD

John D. Billard, the organizer of the Lyon & Billard company, was a very genial gentleman. One of his

JOHN D. BILLARD.

characteristics was to do his figuring on a new shingle. I often saw him in his lumber yard solving his mathematical problems in this way. He was an ardent billiard player at the old Home club. When making a shot after hitting the ball he would invariably stand on tip toe and follow the ball as far as he could with his cue. His company took numerous building jobs in its early days. His son, John L., tells of Horace and Dennis Wilcox, when the Britannia company was at the corner of South Colony and Main streets, racing down Hanover street to settle their disputes, the one who finished first was the winner of the dispute.

## NATHAN FENN

One of Meriden's active men about fifty years ago was Nathan Fenn. He owned the land where the Waterbury depot stands on West Main street and lived nearby. There was a dam across the depression then and quite a large pond covering many acres to the north. Fenn used the water to run a saw mill. It was covered with ice in winter and was a favorite place for skating. Further west the water was impounded several times coming down the west mountain. There were two ponds in what is now Hubbard park. One was used until the park was started for housing ice and the other water was conveyed by a canal which fed an overshot water wheel, the remains of which could be seen not so many years ago, for the first factory of what is now the Foster, Merriam company. Subsequently Charles Parker had an iron foundry where the entrance to Hubbard park is, the pond furnishing power for his tumbling barrels. The pond which fur-

WALTER HUBBARD.

nished water for what is now the Parker clock shop was lower down and still has its uses.

Mr. Fenn was one of Meriden's early match makers, as was the late Hobart Hull. The sticks were set in frames by hand those days, much of the work being done by children at home. Then the sulphur was applied in the shops. It was a slow process at best.

Mr. Fenn also kept the poorhouse. He was jack of all trades and his last years he repaired watches for a living. He worked persistently to have the city reservoirs located in the west mountains and no doubt his efforts did the trick. Mr. Fenn was short, medium build and had a full beard.

## WALTER HUBBARD

More than forty years ago, when there was not an up-to-date hotel in the whole state, Walter Hubbard erected the Winthrop hotel. It had a large patronage for years, other cities being given the go bye for the better accommodations to be found in Meriden. It was Mr. Hubbard's first contribution to benefit the city. Years afterward he became interested in another local project. He told me at first he only intended putting an arch over what is now the first entrance to Hubbard park. Before he had started the idea was enlarged, then there was planning on a big scale until fourteen hundred acres was embodied in what is one of the most natural parks in New England. It has every variety of tree that can be grown in our climate, to which has been added shrubs and flowers, making the sloping hills and mountain a landscape scene of unsurpassed beauty. There are miles of beautiful drives and capping one of the highest peaks is Castle Craig, which one can ascend

NATHANIEL L. BRADLEY.

and view the country for some thirty miles on a bright day. Mr. Hubbard, who had spent years of his life as a manufacturer, in his sunset days took a great deal of satisfaction in developing his paradise. Jokingly he said it is not my money I am spending but that of my heirs. He not only wanted to have the mountain a beauty spot but he urged the destruction of private billboards upon their owners which disfigured West Main street from the city out. The entrance and opposite side of Hemlock Grove he beautified and the City and Brookside parks he did not neglect. In his mature days he was rather shy of praise, but as his pet project grew, receiving enconiums on all sides, he became enthusiastic and welcomed all that was showered upon him.

## NATHANIEL L. BRADLEY

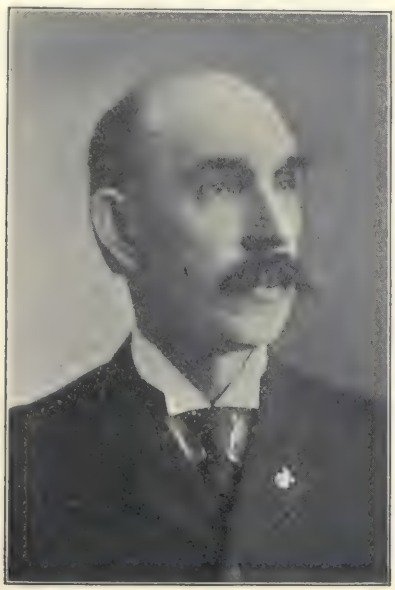
Nathaniel L. Bradley, unlike his partner, Mr. Hubbard, did not establish a lasting monument, although unostentatiously he did many charitable deeds. He was greatly interested in the local hospital, and from a talk I had with him one day I expected he would make the institution a generous endowment. He told me he expected to do as much for Meriden as his partner. Mr. Bradley and I went on several trips investigating affairs for the board of trade. I enjoyed hearing him tell of his early struggles, as both he and Mr. Hubbard at first dealt in poverty before success came their way. To-day there is no doubt that the Bradley & Hubbard Manufacturing company is the best off financially of any concern in the city.

## JAMES A. CURTISS

James A. Curtiss established the first cash grocery business in Meriden, which, although now conducted

JAMES A. CURTISS.

by Henry C. Bibeau, has had an existence of over fifty years. Mr. Curtiss bought hundreds of horses from the west for the local market and was a successful trader. He was at one time a clothing merchant with his brother-in-law. His most successful venture was the



JAMES T. KAY.

establishment of the big Curtiss-Way printing plant, although both he and Mr. Way did not long survive its prosperity.

## JAMES T. KAY

The old time plumber of Meriden is James T. Kay. He has served the public at least fifty years. He has

WILLIAM F. ROCKWELL.

taken his son into partnership. Mr. Kay has had several locations but is now in a well appointed establishment in State street. Some of his early work has been in place so long that erosion and rust has eaten up the material he used, but not so with Mr. Kay, he is still on his job.

## WILLIAM F. ROCKWELL

Now we have just passed a new tariff law it reminds me of one of the most persistent and well posted champions of high tariff that made Washington judge him by his merits—the late William F. Rockwell. It was my pleasure to ride to or from New York seated beside Mr. Rockwell occasionally. When the trip ended I was much better acquainted with what was going on in the tariff game than if I had read the newspapers through the whole controversy of legislation. He was tall and slim but had a commanding and convincing manner which carried conviction with it. His son, Charles F., is following in his father's footsteps but I doubt if he has attained his father's wisdom as to details of the subject.

## JOSEPH MORSE

Another character on the same order was Joseph Morse. He built with James Cook the Morse & Cook block. It is a four-story building. Its walls are only eight inches thick. When I was erecting the first Journal building and laying a sixteen-inch wall, "Uncle Joe" came along, looked the work over and remarked, "Building too heavy, young man. Too heavy."

"Uncle Joe" formerly peddled meat from a cart. One of the stories told was, after weighing a piece of meat he would figure six times six is sixty-six; "Call it sixty cents."

JOSEPH MORSE.

# DETAILS OF AN ACTIVE LIFE.

**Enumeration of Numerous Organizations and Newspapers That Were Founded by the Writer.**

When the Meriden Daily Journal was started in 1886, there were only two press associations serving New England, they were the Associated and United. They were a monopoly and would not serve several newspapers in their territory. The long distance telephone was perfected at this time, when the writer with George W. Hills, of the Bridgeport Post, George W. Flint, of the Danbury News, and James M. Emerson, of the Ansonia Sentinel perfected a scheme to open up an office in New York to send by long distance telephone, so that each office took off the "news" at the same time. This arrangement was later succeeded by the Connecticut Press Association of which I became president. I was a member of the executive committee and manager of the American National Red Cross for several years.

I organized the T. H. Hubbard Paper Company with office and warehouse in Boston. We sold all kinds of book and writing papers, cardboard, etc., with a wholesale trade extending as far west as Cincinnati. This company had an existance of nine years when it was sold.

I became president of the Washington State Colinization Company in 1905. This was organized to buy and sell logged off lands in the state of Washington of which

MERIDEN MEN OF MARK

FRANK S. FAY
For Years Judge of City and Police Court

it has sold thousands of acres to hundreds of settlers. It also bought and sold nearly one-half of the building lots of the city of Aberdeen, upon which to-day stands its most substantial homesteads.

Besides being president of the Meriden, Southington, and Compounce Tramway Company, I was elected president of the Meriden, Middletown and Guilford Electric railroad. This was leased to the Consolidated road but repudiated when the big road became involved in financial difficulties, although some $40,000 had already been spent.

In 1911 the Silver City Realty Company was organized of which I became president. This was formed for the purpose of buying up old shacks in the center of the city, tearing them down, and erecting suitable buildings in their places. The properties 6, 8, 10 and 12 Colony street covering 65 x 70 feet, were bought for this purpose. As the larger part of the financing fell to my lot, I finally bought up all the stock and took over the property.

I was president of the Meriden Board of Trade for seven years. Some of its history is told elsewhere.

When the Clara Barton Memorial Association was formed, I became its president. The object of this society is to secure funds, of which several thousand dollars is in the treasury, which is to be used in erecting a suitable memorial in her native town of Oxford, Mass.

In 1912 I founded the Puritan Trust Company of Meriden, and became chairman of its executive committee.

In 1913, an organizer and director in the Broadway Bank and Trust Company of New Haven.

In 1914, an organizer and director in the East Hampton Bank and Trust Company and also the American Bank and Trust Company of New Haven.

FRANCIS ATWATER.
At Age of Forty Years.

Subsequently, I was an organizer of the Wallingford Trust Company and the Torrington Trust Company.

In 1919, I consolidated two job printing offices in Meriden, that of the Journal Publishing Company, and the Connecticut Calendar Company. The same year, I became president of an artificial stone company.

In 1920, with I. Henry Mag, a young Jewish lawyer, we bought the property corner of East Main and Crown streets which we sold thirty days later. Then we bought of Mrs. Anna G. Seeley, A. Leighton Andrews, and Dexter L. Bishop, 133 feet frontage with buildings on West Main street. We extended this purchase to include 168 feet on Hanover street from John L. Billard and Bradley & Hubbard Manufacturing Company. We also bought the Moran property on East Main street. On the West Main street side, in 1922, we moved to the rear the Guy residence; we erected a store and office building in its place. On Hanover street in 1922 we erected a garage salesroom and ten apartment building; two stores and an eight stall garage. In these later transactions we added another young Jewish partner, Benjamin Krentzman.

The enumeration of my newspaper experience is as follow:

Foreman at 16, Meriden Literary Recorder; founder and publisher of the Windemere Weekly Forum, Wallingford 1877-8; assistant foreman Harford Courant, 1880; foreman, Press Recorder, Meriden 1881; manager Red Bluff (Cal.) Sentinel 1882; founder and publisher, Meriden Sunday News, 1884; founder of Meriden Daily Journal, 1886, and president Journal Publishing Company until 1913; founded in 1899, Havana Journal (now the Ha-

## MERIDEN MEN OF MARK

JAMES A. COOK
(Deceased.)
Builder of Several Central Blocks.

vana Post) first all-American Journal in Cuba; bought and sold in 1900, New Britain Daily News, and in 1901, bought and sold the Waterbury Daily Republican.

I have retired from the head of all these enterprises, and only hold two directorships at this writing. During my active period I was a member of the American Publisher's Association, National Typothetae, New England Historical Association, Meriden Home and Country Clubs, several secret orders, and member executive committee American Red Cross.

Since leaving Meriden, Mrs. Atwater and I traveled through Japan, the Phillipines, and China. This was in 1914. We would have gone around the globe, but the world war interfered. We returned and bought a residence in New Haven, about half a mile from where my ancestors David Atwater settled in 1638, and a mile from where Benjamin Fenn located the same year. In 1921-2 we toured the South Seas, stopping at Tahiti, Society Island, where my sister-in-law resides; Raratonga, Wellington, New Zealand, Sydney and other cities in Australia, Samoa and Sandwich Islands.

When publishing the Havana (Cuba) Journal I made the trip so many times I was called a commuter, and the same as to trips to the Pacific coast. On one occasion after returning from Aberdeen, Washington, which trip I had made going and returning in fifteen days, nine traveling and six attending to business, I received a telegram from my brother Dorence in San Francisco if I wished to see him alive to come immediately. I took the next train and arrived there four and one-half days later, although I did not relish making a second trip so quickly. We had a splendid visit, so full of brotherly love and re-

GEORGE R. CURTIS
(Deceased.)
A Founder of the Meriden Britannia Company.

minscences. He was up and around and I hoped he was needlessly alarmed, so after staying six days I returned making two round trips across the country in sixty days. After my return home, he sent letters every few days, but his weakness could be noticed, as each one the writing became more illegible, until the last which arrived the day he died, which was scarcely readable.

# FAST TEAM WORK.

**When The Journal Scored In Base Ball In Its First Number.**

Thomas L. Reilly came from New Britain to Meriden to study law, but in a few weeks commenced to do newspaper work. He undoubtedly was the best reporter that Meriden ever had. He had a nose for news and his style was pleasing. On several occasions the Journal had cause to get out extra editions. The Republican was in the field then. With Tom to gather the news and the writer to get the mechanical force out of bed and to work our competitor we always left in the lurch. Notably was this so when the car barns burned and ninety horses were destroyed. Just as we were ready to go to press we heard of the death of Lemuel J. Curtis. The extra was held up until this important item was written and set up. Even with this delay the Journal was on the street when workers were going to the shops. Two hours later our rival appeared, but hardly sold a copy. Of our first achievement Mr. Reilly had this to say on the thirtieth anniversary of the Journal:

"What was the most notable thing in connection with the first publication of the Journal?

"To my mind then and now the answer to that question, which you have asked me to give, is the full report,

## MERIDEN MEN OF MARK

GEORGE E. SAVAGE.
President Manning, Bowman Co.

inning by inning, as well as the box score of the ball game that took place on the afternoon of April 17, 1886 between the Meriden club of the Eastern league and the famous Detroit team containing the original big four of baseball—Richardson, Brouthers, White and Rowe, as well as Bennett and Hanlon.

"To print the full report of a ball game played the same afternoon, is considered quite an enterprising thing to-day, with all the facilities offered by telephone, automobile and other latter day means of quick communication.

"To do such a thing when there was no telephone, no automobile, no trolley, was some stunt and that is what the Journal did on its birthday—Saturday afternoon, April 17, 1886.

"It was not by accident that the big game and the birth of the Journal took place the same day. The ball game was booked before the date of the printing of the first number of the paper was decided upon. There was some uncertainty about the exact day for the first appearance of the paper, but as soon as it was definitely known that the Detroits were to be here Saturday, April 17, that date was soon settled upon for the first issue of Meriden's new daily afternoon newspaper, as was also the plan of covering the ball game in the initial number.

"Meriden's league baseball ground in those days was located on the pasture land, known as the "Ten acre lot," and now occupied by Pasco and Lockwood streets and Ames avenue. The most direct way to it from the 'Corner' was by way of Windsor avenue from West Main street and thence over what is now Springdale avenue, but which had no name in that period, except

## MERIDEN MEN OF MARK

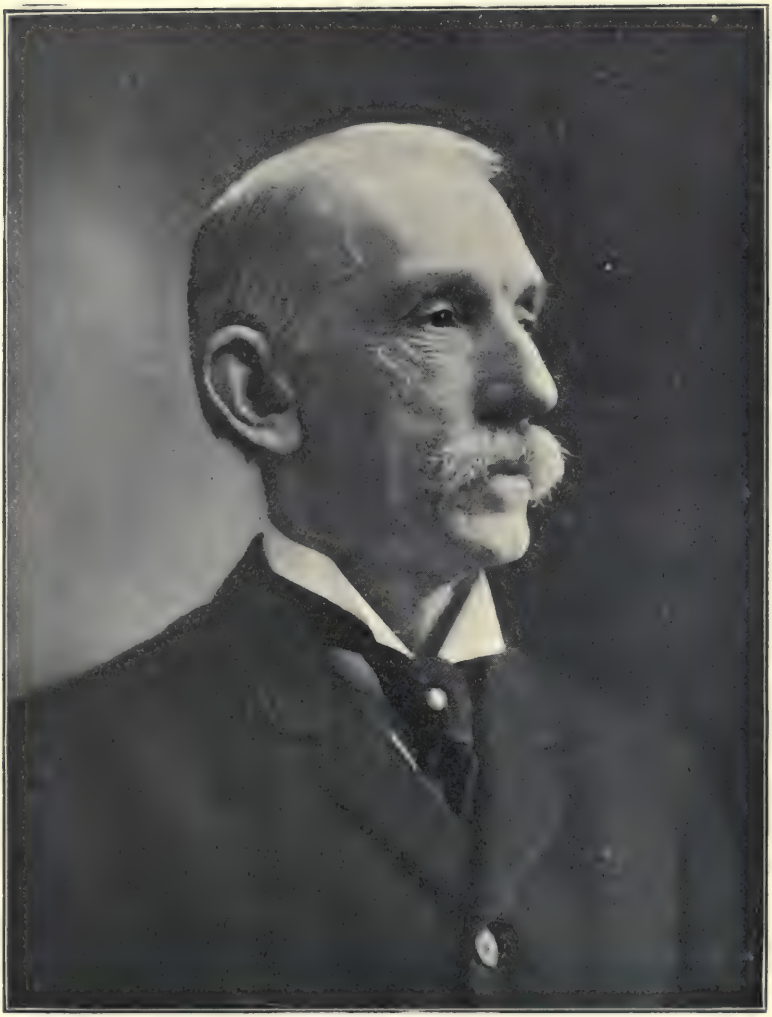
C. E. SCHUNACK.
Successful Paper Box Manufacturer.

the bad names given it by the baseball fans as they stumbled over the rocks in the roadway on their way to and from the ground. Those who did not walk to the grounds or go in private carriages, were taken there in 'busses or stages at fifteen cents, each way. Under these transportation difficulties it can readily be seen that it was some undertaking to get a report of the ball game into the office of the newspaper and have it printed in the regular edition of the paper the same afternoon.

"Here is the way the job was done: The writer arranged with Charles W. Flagg, then manager of the Postal Telegraph office, which was located in Palace block, occupying part of the present Powers shoe store, to run a special wire from the ground to the office. That work was performed with considerable difficulty as there was a scarcity of poles in the ball ground section, but the wire was run and everything was in ship shape by noon on the day of the great game.

"The grounds were packed to see Meriden's new team and the stars from Detroit. As every play was made Manager Flagg, sitting beside the writer, ticked it off to the receiver in the office and the copy as fast as edited was given to the hand compositor to set. The linotype was unknown. Sending in the running story of the game was easy enough, the trouble coming with the box score. It was decided that it would save time to drive the reporter to the office and let him finish there whatever remained to be done in the matter of the box and summary. That part of the report of the game was completed when the writer reached the office and it was given out to the two fastest compositors,

MERIDEN MEN OF MARK



GEORGE A. FAY

(Deceased.)

Over Fifty Years Meriden's Leading Lawyer.

one setting the box score proper and the other the score by innings and summary.

"The game began at 3 o'clock and was over about 4:30. It was a few minutes after 5 when the newsboys were scampering over the streets yelling out the first number of the Meriden Journal with full account of the game played that afternoon.

"The story of the game took up a column. It delayed for a short time the appearance of the paper, but it was worth the delay. The patrons of the new publication talked about it for days and the Detroit players took away with them copies of the paper to show what a live town in Connecticut could do when it came to enterprise.

"What was the score? Detroit 11, Meriden 0.

"Meriden did not score in the ball game, but it did score heavily with its new paper and it has been piling up bigger scores ever since that memorable afternoon thirty years ago to-day.

"The Journal itself had a perfect fielding average that day and it has made very few errors since, while it has been batting pretty close to the 1,000 mark in the Newspaper Enterprise league during all those years."

Mr. Reilly knew Meriden and its people. It was no great effort for him alone to cover and write more columns of local news than the staff of both Meriden papers do today. It was too bad he should have acquired the political bug which led him into the mayorship, congressman and sheriff. The frequent campaigns for election has left its imprints of a pronounced frown.

The day the above was written I set a few lines of type in the good old-fashioned way. It came as natural

## MERIDEN MEN OF MARK

JOHN IVES

(Deceased.)

Over Fifty Years Meriden's Leading Dry Goods Merchant

as if I had quit but yesterday and I felt so contented. Perhaps if Tom, who is out for another election as sheriff, could return to those good old days when he pleased all the people as a reporter, instead of being a political buffet, he, too, would heave a sigh of relief and be content. It hurts Mr. Reilly's pride to acknowledge he is the older by two months than I.

# ORGANIZED LABOR.

**My Belief Is That Any Benefits Gained Are Offset by Demoralized Workmen.**

I had more or less dealings with organized labor, at one time having contracts with five different unions. Having been an employee and an employer I believe I am competent to judge something of the merits of the situation. I am free to say some old time abuses of the laboring man have been corrected by organization, but what good has been done has been more than offset by the loss of honor, decency, good workmanship and pride of accomplishment.

If you want to see demoralization look at the typographical appearance of your leading newspapers. See the hundreds of errors in every issue, words divided in the middle of a syllable, lines mixed up and put in wrong places. The union will explain this is due to mechanical typesetting. I say it is the result of slovenly workmen who take no interest or have any pride in their trade. Before the advent of the union, which has established one price for all, good or bad, the workman was paid according to his ability, he was ambitious to learn and prove what he could do. He was not watching the clock, doing as little as possible and encouraging others to do the same. In regard to demoralized ma-

## MERIDEN MEN OF MARK

B. L. COLLINS

(Deceased.)

Successful Grain and Feed Merchant.

chine typesetting I will say from long experience that if the operator is as painstaking to-day as when I learned my trade in the first place he would make but few errors which in turn would not have to be corrected with a chance of wrong substitution.

The man who formerly was a crack worker, when his companions are now no way his equal and getting the same pay, sees no reason for him to display any energy, and invariably becomes disgusted and relaxes all further effort, drifts along with the tide. This is what the labor leaders encourage as more men are required to produce the same amount of production. When prices go up, keep on rising, the laborer complains of his wages not keeping pace with the cost of living. He never acknowledges reduced production is a factor but blames the condition on Wall street or the profiteer, but I want to say right here the greatest cause of high rents and materials is the minimum hours, maximum pay and curtailed production, which organized labor has set for its standard.

Whatever benefit it has been to the working classes has been more than offset by the utter demoralization and lack of encouragement for its members to return in labor the equivalent of what it is paid for. If on the other hand the organization was not led by demagogs it could be turned to be the greatest blessing of mankind by insisting its members should be masters of their trade before being allowed to join, that they should do a day's work for a day's pay, that workmen should be graded as to their ability, compensation graded likewise, which would be a stimulus to reach the highest grade, and last but not least, make merit a factor for recognition instead of coercion, intimidation

## MERIDEN MEN OF MARK

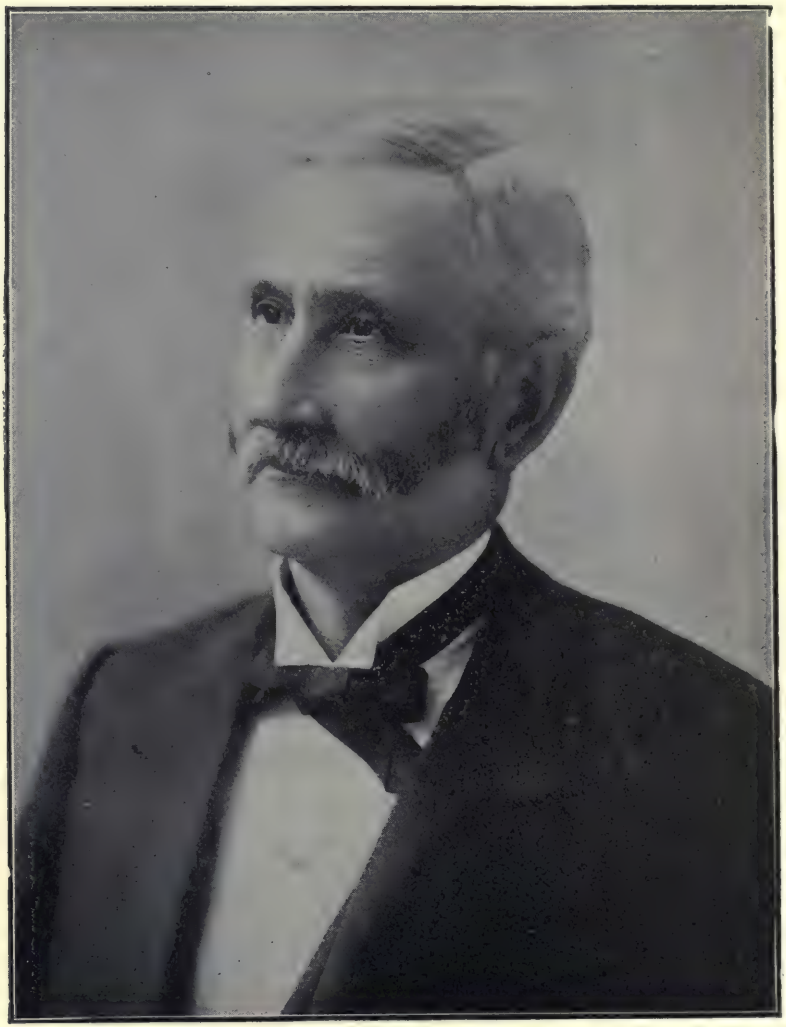
AARON L. COLLINS
(Deceased.)
Cutlery and Silver Ware Manufacturer.

and thuggery. The organization must drop lots of its rules and regulations which interfere with the freedom of the employer, and also recognize that if others do not want to belong to organized labor they have rights which must be respected.

Some years ago the chairman of the chapel, who is the person that represents the union in the composing room, informed me it had been voted the night before that I must not do any more work in that room. I told him where he and his union could go, that if they did not like my actions there was nothing to hinder their getting out, but as the owner I proposed to stay. He then told me that some of the members had appealed from the vote to the international president at Indianapolis, Ind., and nothing further would be done until he reported back. I informed the chairman that he or any one else could not tell me when I could or could not work; that unions had no claim on me. President Lynch evidently knew this as I was afterwards informed that his advice was that it was not a good subject to agitate, but in another city he sustained the local which raised the same question.

I had no use for out-of-town delegates. One day five big, strapping men came into my office. They told me they were representatives from different unions. I informed them they would be in better business carrying a hod or laying brick; that I had no use for them, and that if there were any differences with my help we could settle our own affairs without outside interference. They staid in town several days, lived at the Winthrop, smoked good cigars, and the laboring man paid to keep them in luxury. Of course every little while these loafers had to stir up strife between employee and employer to show they were a necessity.

## MERIDEN MEN OF MARK



LEVI E. COE
(Deceased.)
Formerly President Meriden Savings Bank.

When the Los Angeles Times building was blown up, killing twenty-three, repeated dynamiting of structural steel occurred, and only a short time ago the Herrin massacre of forty-three individuals took place, was a single union member dismissed or disciplined? No, nor when convicted by a jury of their peers! After being imprisoned upon their release often they are given their offices back.

Organized labor must clean house if it is to have the respect of over one hundred million people who are not affiliated with their cause; the tail has been wagging the dog too long.

# OLD RAILROAD RECOLLECTIONS.

**Engines Burned Wood Sawed by Horse Power—Smoke Stacks With Hood Expanded at Top.**

The original passenger depot in Meriden stood on the west side of the track. Railroad avenue was used by express and baggage wagons. On the east side was the freight depot. The wood for the engines was sawed by power furnished by a horse treadmill. The smoke stacks were wide expanded affairs at the top with a sieve to keep the sparks from flying and setting fire to combustible stuff along the road wayside.

The engines were mostly named after the stars, such as Jupiter, Mars, Saturn, etc. About Thanksgiving time trains of twelve cars, drawn by two engines, were an annual sight. A small dummy engine, enclosed in a frame about the size of an auto furniture van, was used by the officials for inspection purposes. E. M. Reed, afterward vice president and some times acting president, designed the tunnel under North Main street in Hartford and it was built under his supervision. I rode on an annual pass, but it was overlooked one year. I wrote to President Bishop in regard to its renewal. He answered he had received my letter at home, just before his departure for Europe, but to show his reply to Mr. Reed, who would furnish such trip passes as I might need. Later I handed the

letter to Mr. Reed, asking for a trip pass to New York and return. He was writing at the time, but such a burst of profanity I never heard. When he cooled down he handed me the pass, saying if the company put a handbill in every man's hand along the road it would not be so much trouble as making out the d—— passes. Reed was a good engineer but a poor executive.

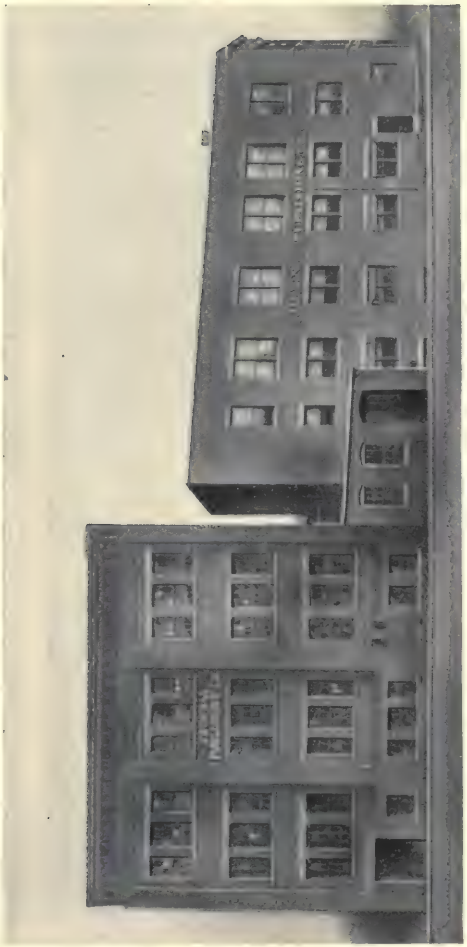
The first broad-minded man to become president of the Consolidated road was Charles P. Clark. He recognized the great growth being thrust upon the system and started out to meet it, but the expenditures were so great that it was an uphill job to bring the other directors to his viewpoint. I came in contact with Mr. Clark after I built the electric road to Southington. I suggested he add it to the Meriden system which the Consolidated had acquired to stop through lines being built from New York to Boston. Mr. Clark replied that his directors were kicking because he had tied up so much dead capital in the Meriden deal and hoped instead his buying I would find some way to relieve him. I induced a Philadelphia syndicate through me to make an offer for it, also the steam line from Meriden to Waterbury. The offer covered the purchase price for both properties but no interest or improvement allowance. Mr. Clark was delighted. He said I could have the two properties, but of course he would have to get the approval of his directors which would meet on the following Saturday. Later he said the directors did not approve, but I could rest assured that he appreciated my endeavor as by refusing this chance they could no longer damn him for the money invested.

On another occasion Mr. Clark promised to stop a

train going through Meriden not scheduled to stop. Some time afterward I reminded him that the train was throwing dust in our eyes. He said, "Young man, how long will you have to live to know that promises are made only to be broken." He laughed so heartily, though thoroughly provoked, I joined with him.

At one time I had a personal acquaintance with every conductor on the Hartford division. These all retired and I doubt if there is one alive to-day. These old-timers wrote passes which would be accepted by conductors on other roads, even as far as Chicago. Commutation tickets were seldom looked at. People would travel for long periods without renewing their tickets or being molested. Finally, one man who stopped travelling, told how long he had ridden free. This came to official ears, when conductors were ordered to look at their tickets the first day of each month. Some skipped this day. The road discovered it. Commuters now show their tickets every trip.

PLANT OF MERIDEN DAILY JOURNAL, COR. CROWN AND PERKINS AND SO. COLONY STS.
Printing, Power Plant and Garage. Journal Office Building.
Erected under supervision of Francis Atwater.



PLANT OF MERIDEN DAILY JOURNAL, SOUTH COLONY ST. FRONT.
Printing and Power Plants. Garage. Office Building.
Erected under supervision of Francis Atwater.

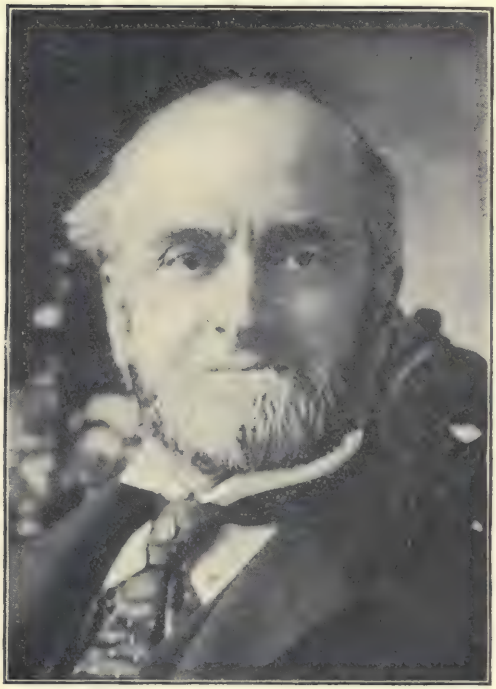
# WALLINGFORD TORNADO.

**One of the First on the Ground After the Great Devastation.**

The Wallingford tornado occurred shortly after 6 o'clock p. m., August 9, 1878. In those days the telephone was in its experimental stage and only a few cities had any house connections, say nothing of state or national extensions. As a reporter I had permission of the Consolidated road to ride on passenger or freight trains, but first had to sign a contract waiving any claim for damages in case of accident. I was looking up a story on this particular day in which the conductor of a way freight leaving Meriden daily just before 6 o'clock p. m. was a party. At that time way trains did not have cabooses attached. The conductor, knowing I had a permit to ride, asked me to come into an open car and we could talk. The train started for Wallingford. While a short distance away the engineer whistled for "down brakes," freight cars not being equipped with air brakes.

The conductor looked out of the car door, acted as if about to jump, and turning to me told me to save myself. I grabbed an upright rod and waited for a crash, not knowing the danger confronting us. However, the momentum of the train was checked and finally brought

## MERIDEN MEN OF MARK



EDWARD MILLER
(Deceased.)
Founder of the E. Miller & Co.

to a stop. None too soon for right ahead was a big pile of debris with a telegraph wire stretching across the track which had pulled off the headlight of the engine. Looking out of the car door I saw all around the buildings were demolished and laying flat. I could not imagine what had happened as I passed through that same territory on a passenger train not two hours before and all was well. It was like awakening out of a horrible dream and finding it was true.

I jumped out of the car, walked over to Colony street and saw human bodies scattered about. They had been rolled over and over and were covered with mud and dirt. They looked as though they had been dead for days. I was soon joined by another man. We looked around to see if there were any living. We found one woman, who begged for water. I raised her head to make her comfortable while my companion tried to find a receptacle to bring water in. It took him some time, the woman cursing him for his delay, but when it was offered her, her breath left her body and we laid her tenderly on the ground.

All around was devastation and as I saw its terrible effects I realized that it was the work of a tornado. Previously I had read of the great force the wind could command, but never expected to have its results come to me so suddenly. I afterward learned that it had swept from the west, dipping into Community lake, forcing the water along and disappearing in the east.

I knew I was in the midst of a great newspaper story. I rushed to the depot, wired several large papers in New York, Boston and elsewhere, "One hundred killed. Big tornado. Want story?" Six replied yes. The number

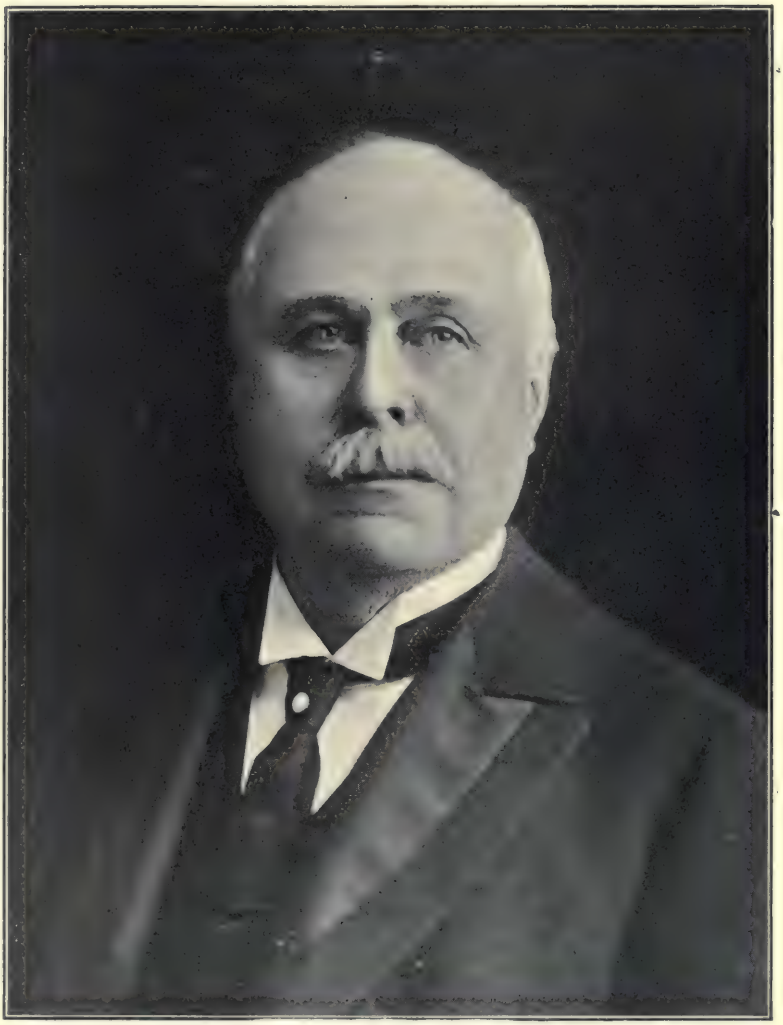
of dead as finally counted was only one-third, but first sight magnified my vision.

To my advantage only the day previous Seymour Hall, a lawyer, who owned many of the homes demolished, asked me to take a ride. He was collecting his monthly rentals. These tenants were all Irish. Mr. Hall introduced me to each family. He had a jolly comment for all, which quick wittedly was returned. Thus the names of the victims were familiar. There was one family in particular who were mixed up in frequent drunken brawls and were no strangers to the local court. They had all been brought up in the Catholic faith. While searching through the debris with others I met the late Father Mallon. I said it was a terrible calamity. He said he believed it was the curse of God on a wicked people.

I wrote the story as fast as I could and gave it to the telegraph operator, with instructions to send to each paper which wanted it, first to one and then to the other in turn, but as she was only a commercial operator the work was slow. In a couple of hours other reporters came into town but found they were blocked in sending their reports as mine so fully took up the single wire. There was no relief until about midnight when assistance came from New Haven. When the "Owl" train going to Hartford came along I took it and finished my strenuous work about 4 o'clock a. m. in the editorial room of the Hartford Courant.

To those who are not familiar with this great disaster I will add it was first noticed as a darkening cloud in the west, the wind commenced to rise, then it grew stronger and finally taking a strip about half a mile

MERIDEN MEN OF MARK



WILBUR F. DAVIS
(Deceased.)
Lawyer and Judge of Probate.

wide, it demolished everything in its wake. Its force was most furious on the plains and hillside just about half a mile north of the center of Wallingford though its effects were felt for three miles to the east.

On the plains the houses were mostly one and one-half stories high, populated and rented by poor people. Many were returning from their day's work when the elements destroyed them. A wooden Catholic church was flattened to the ground, but a parochial brick school building just south was left standing. The dead, numbering some thirty-three, were brought here and laid out in rows. On the following Sunday they were all buried at the same hour in the church yard where had stood the fallen edifice. It was a solemn service attended by many priests from many parishes and witnessed by probably the largest number of people Wallingford ever had at one time.

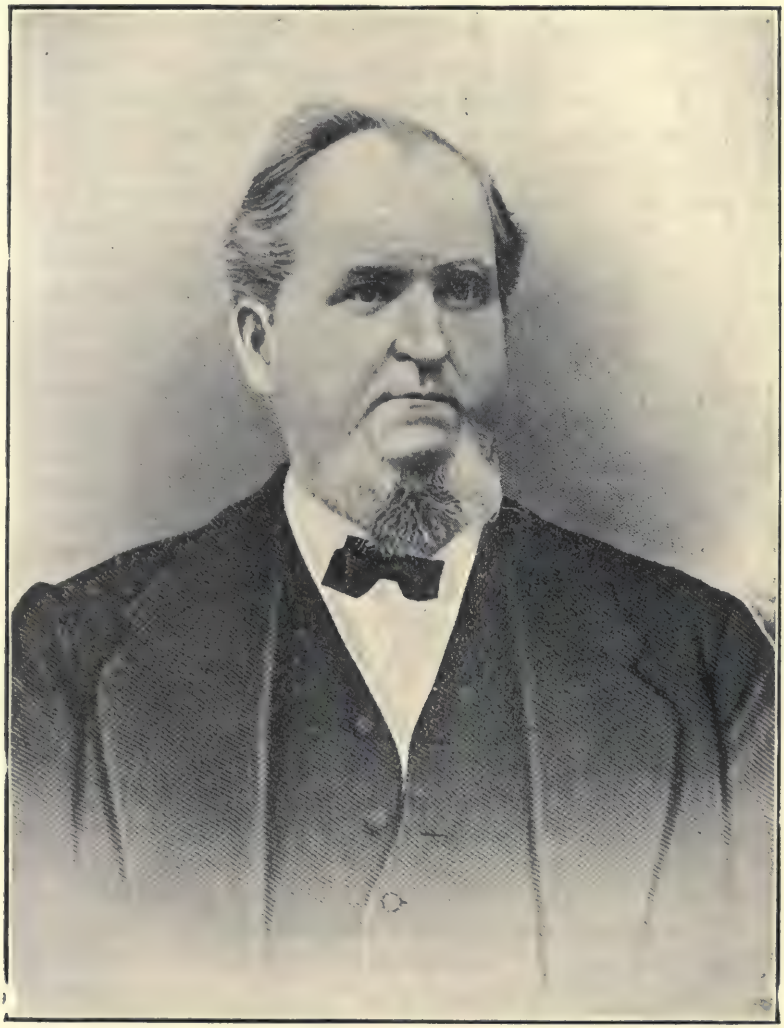
On the hill the largest elm trees were snapped off like pipe stems, one story was blown off the school house and several houses damaged and destroyed. The tornado did many strange things, one was the turning on its own foundation of a good-sized house. These freaks were published as they were related for many weeks afterward. This event furnished the thrill of my life. Had our train been on time we would have been in the midst of the storm.

Only a few suffered injuries, the force being so great that no one in its path survived to tell the tale.

## SLIDE AT THE PEAT WORKS

A year or two after this episode I reported the land slide at the Peat works about two miles above Meriden,

MERIDEN MEN OF MARK



W. W. LYMAN.
(Deceased.)
One of the Founders Meriden Britannia Company.

which took with it the east track of the Consolidated road. This catastrope was accompanied by no fatality. The road bed went down about thirty feet. Train loads of stone were dumped in daily but did not seem to fill the cavity but finally grade was reached and rails replaced. It was supposed the job had been made permanent, but watchmen were put on to follow every train to watch for results. One night a train had passed over when the man following was drawn down by another slide and had it not been for the bolted rails no doubt would have been drowned. His cries brought relief from his house nearby and before another train came along he had so far recovered that he flagged it before it was in danger. An examination made at this time developed that the track rested upon a reclining rock so that when the car loads of rock were dumped upon it the material would slide into the muck and disappear. The solution came at last by substituting sand which adhered and has made a permanent support and no further trouble has occurred.

## DISTRESSING SIGHT

While in Red Bluff, California, one day I went to report the conflagration of a dwelling house. In this section every year there is a dry spell of six months or more in duration. Combustible material gets as dry as tinder. On this occasion early in the afternoon the house caught fire. It was occupied by a mother and several children. The mother was asleep. The children when they saw the fire rushed in to wake her up. The fire travelled so quickly that in coming out the flesh on their ankles and feet was burned and sloughed off

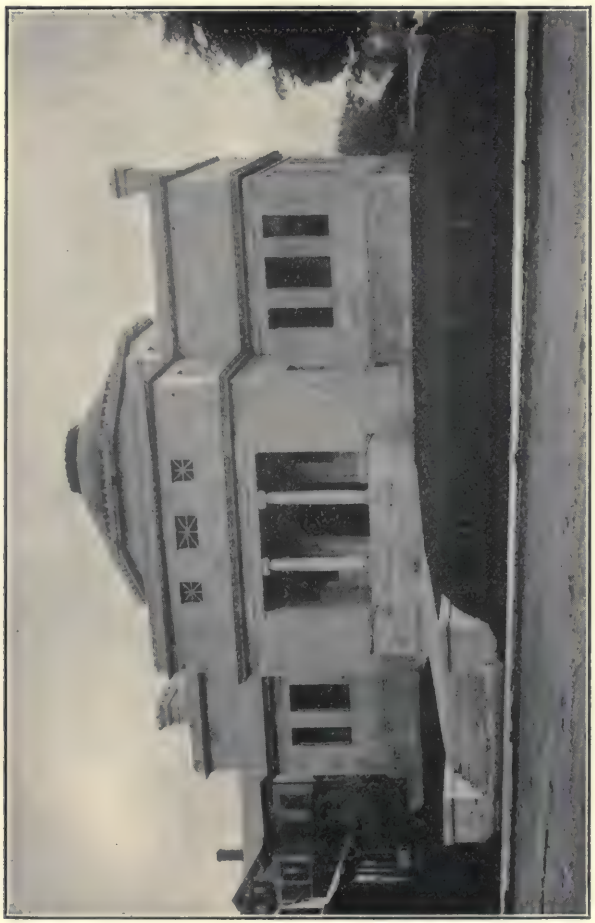
the bones, while the little victims lay on the ground screeching with pain and horror. I believe it was the most distressing sight that my work made me a witness of.

## WANTED IN AUSTRALIA

After establishing the first American paper in Havana, Cuba, then selling it and returning home, there came a telephone call one day to come to New York. It was from a Mr. Palmer, who at one time was the manager of the New York American. He had heard of my foreign experiences. There came to his office at this time two gentlemen from Melbourne, Australia. They were anxious to secure the services of some one to go to their city to establish an up-to-date newspaper conducted the same as the larger ones in the United States. Mr. Palmer told them I was the man to fill the bill. At that time the Melbourne papers were made up in a helter-skelter fashion, with no idea of the value of heads, size or style of type and were blanket affairs of four large pages.

The Australians told me they had raised $200,000 for the project and would increase the capital if necessary. They asked me if I would take the management, and what salary I wanted. I told them I would undertake to put the establishment on a firm basis in a year for $25,000 and expenses. They said the Australians were nearly all English descent or at least the reading public was, and that they were slow in adopting new ways and it was their belief it would take three years before it could be safely turned over to home management. They were prepared to offer $75,000 to cover that

MRS. AUGUSTA CURTIS
(Deceased.)
Donated Curtis Library to City of Meriden.



CURTIS MEMORIAL LIBRARY.

period. I told them the remuneration was quite flattering but any project that required more than a year to establish at my time of life was beyond my patience and that I would have to respectfully decline. I would have taken great pleasure in trying the experiment in Melbourne had my time limit been acceptable.

## MERIDEN MEN OF MARK

ISAAC C. LEWIS
(Deceased.)
One of the Founders Meriden Britannia Co.

# FRIEND OF CLARA BARTON.

**For Over Forty Years the Confidential Agent of the World's Greatest Humanitarian.**

I had the gratification of serving for forty years as the confidential friend and agent of Clara Barton, the founder and for years the president of the American National Red Cross. She did more in her life than any other person to relieve human suffering and distress.

Our acquaintance began when I was a slip of a boy, seven years old, when she came to our home, at that time being on a lecture tour through Connecticut, appealing to the people and to the Connecticut Legislature to see that justice was done my brother, Dorence Atwater, who had been unjustly court-martialed and had served at hard labor in the state prison at Auburn, N. Y. He had been a Union soldier who was captured and confined twenty-two months in that terrible rebel prison pen at Andersonville where he had secretly copied the list of the martyred dead, numbering some 13,000.

Miss Barton, at the close of the war, started a bureau for missing soldiers, and learning in May, 1865, of the large number of names in the possession of my brother she sent for him.

It was to appeal to the people of his native state to relieve his fair name from an unjust stigma that brought

CLARA BARTON.

From a photograph taken at St. Petersburg, Russia, July, 1902, when the Decoration of the Order of the Red Cross was conferred upon Miss Barton by the Czar and Empress Dowager.

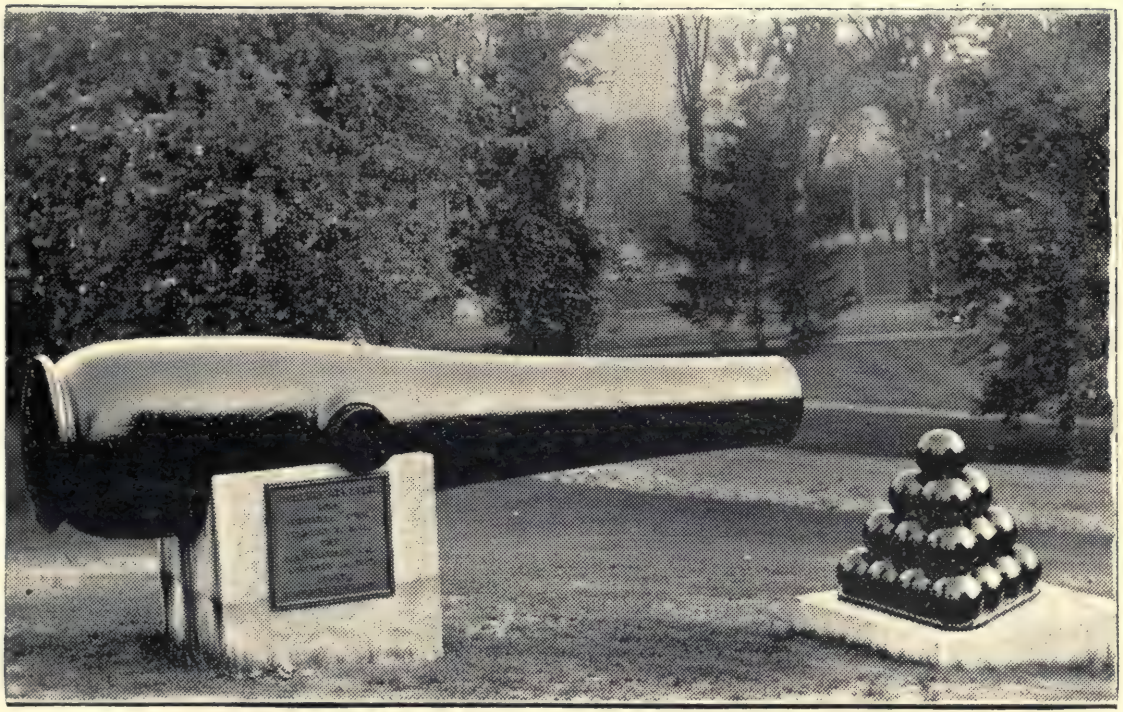
Clara Barton to Connecticut, and it was then I first met her and from that time until the end the friendship ripened and was cherished.

I visited her at Christmas time on her ninetieth birthday, when we talked over for several hours the things that had been done, the people who had passed away during our acquaintance, and our own private affairs. She knew she had but a short time to live, but if her strength would not permit of further usefulness she was ready to go. She was glad she was born at a period when it seemed to her people were more honorable and there was more distinctive character. On this occasion she said she had long regarded me as a younger brother, and it had been a source of great satisfaction to know that when she needed the counsel and advice of a confidential friend I had always left my business to serve her and she wanted me to know she could not have appreciated and thought more of me had I been her own brother.

I explain this so that it may be known why I tell something of the career of this noble woman who did so much for the world. It can only be but a fragmentary part of her life for if all of her self-sacrificing deeds were to be told the subject could not be covered at this time.

It affords me great pleasure to say that after many, many discussions I persuaded Miss Barton to sit down one evening and commence writing her autobiography, and, although only one booklet has been published, in which she tells the story of her childhood, another is in manuscript, entitled, "The Story of My Girlhood."

It is too bad she did not live to complete her entire autobiography, which it was intended to divide up into and cover six periods. First, her childhood; second, her girlhood; third, her services in the Civil war and bureau



DORENCE ATWATER MEMORIAL GUN, TERRYVILLE, CONN.

for missing soldiers; fourth, lecture field and the Franco-Prussian war; fifth, the establishment and work of the Red Cross, and sixth, the Spanish-American war.

Her friends for years had importuned her to do this work but so much had to be done, her personal correspondence alone was so great, that there seemed no opportunity to begin. She was a visitor at my home nearly every year, staying weeks at a time. She made it a practice to come especially after each field of disaster, when she would bring her staff, and the report of the work accomplished would be made out and generally published under my supervision.

When the Spanish-American war veterans held their reunion in Detroit, President Roosevelt and Miss Barton were the guests of honor. Mrs. Atwater and I accompanied her. When we reached Buffalo for some reason our car was held up for several hours. We took a delightful carriage ride about the city and drove through the beautiful cemetery there. As we passed one particular monument Miss Barton said: "There is the design which I wish to have copied and some time to have a memorial put up in my family yard in Oxford, for my father and mother, my brothers and sister, and to be ready for me when I join them." A hasty sketch was made, measurements taken, and a few months later I was asked to have the work attended to. I did so. The monument was placed as Miss Barton desired.

The family plot was added to and the ground prepared with great forethought. She attended to every detail of this herself. Hundreds of loads of dirt and soil were carted in, and underneath it was placed bushels of salt, the moisture of which will keep the grass green when otherwise it would dry up. In life she did everything

Monument erected to the memory of Dorence Atwater, near Papeete, on the Island of Tahiti, Pacific Ocean.

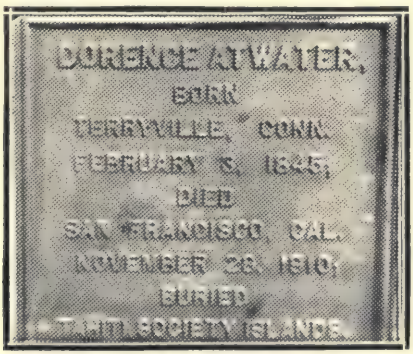
thoroughly. What more natural than that she should want to know her last resting place should be in order when the Master called.

Passing this episode, I wish to say that through the thronged streets of Detroit, Miss Barton's carriage was some distance from that of the President, but everywhere she was recognized and the ovation to this little woman was greater than that given the chief executive. It was upon the return to my house on this trip that for some reason her correspondence did not overtake her. I took advantage of the occasion to suggest that there was no valid excuse why she should not commence right then and there her autobiography. She did not say she would, but the next evening the family was delighted to have her read the first twenty pages of the manuscript finished that day. It was decided later to publish it in booklet form—the first to be called "The Story of My Childhood."

Miss Barton was a nurse and her mission ended when the Civil war ceased but she did not sit down and fold her hands. There were thousands of soldiers missing, many having died on the field of battle and were buried in unknown graves, many more had been captured and died in rebel prisons, and last but not least, there were many cowardly deserters, though some had been placed in this class who had bravely met death or been taken prisoners. She immediately commenced work to furnish information to relatives of the fate of this great army of unknown soldiers.

It was then she heard of Dorence Atwater, who while a prisoner in Andersonville, had been detailed by the rebels to keep a record of the Union dead. Believing these names would never be preserved Mr. Atwater secretly copied them, kept them in his coat lining and

Relics of Andersonville Prison from the collecion brought from there by Miss Clara Barton and Dorence Atwater, August, 1865, and photographed by Brady & Co. for the great National Fair, Washington, June, 1866.




Inscription on Monument in Terryville.

brought them safely through the lines. It was a dangerous, important and self-imposed task, but when these names were added to those already obtained by Miss Barton they furnished thousands of homes the sad intelligence of these missing soldiers. In this work the names of Clara Barton and Dorence Atwater were inseparable. Together with forty painters and joiners they went to Andersonville under orders from the Secretary of War and by the end of July, 1865, they had completed the task of identifying the graves of the 13,000 martyred dead, over each grave placing a head board giving such information as Mr. Atwater had preserved. Previously Mr. Atwater had arranged with the government to copy the rolls containing these names, but in order to make identfication complete they were in his possession. They were placed in his trunk upon his return, and he claimed them as his property. The government also claimed them and as Mr. Atwater was still in the military service he was arrested, court-martialed, and finally sent to Auburn states prison at hard labor. Two months were served, when through Miss Barton's intervention he was discharged. In 1895 she made an address in Mr. Atwater's native town, Plymouth, this state, from which I quote:

"Thirty years ago I came into your state. I went through its villages, its towns, its cities, even your legislative halls, and told the story of Dorence Atwater.

"I even took him with me and showed him to the people, and I asked that the disgrace which rested on him be removed. I never failed to draw sympathy of the people; it was felt and understood; but when more was asked for it failed. I said that he had done a work which God approved and angels smiled on. I asked, moreover, that the government should be asked to retrieve what had been done. I wanted him placed where he should be.

DORENCE ATWATER.

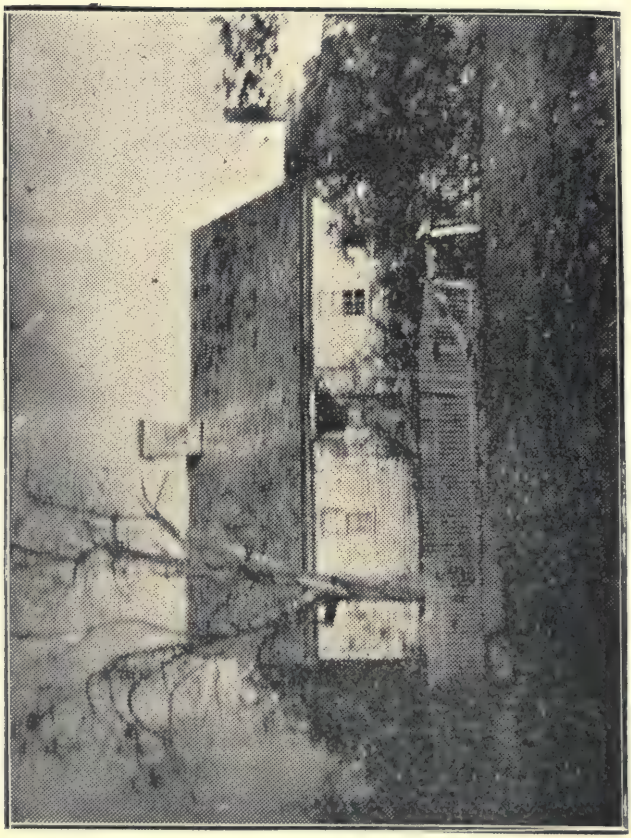
When I saw this fail and death staring him in the face, for he was poor, sick, degraded and disheartened—a prisoner of both South and North—when I saw he was not likely to endure it, I asked then a consulate for him in some climate where he might have a chance to live.

"It was given, and for twenty years he served his country in a civil capacity as faithfully as he had ever done in military; not one word in all the state department ever rested against the work of Dorence Atwater as a consul. But there is something else I would say to you. In my house for thirty years has remained the record that he kept and the dishonorable discharge that he received.

"In the cabinet in that house are the relics, the largest, perhaps the only collection of relics of the stockade of Andersonville, the poor little cups and spoons and ladles, and whatever there was that strove to keep life in those poor wretches and helped them on as they went to their death.

"I gathered them there in that stockade with Dorence Atwater. They lie, as I told you, in that cabinet in my house, and along with them, on the same shelves, lies the dishonorable discharge of Dorence Atwater."

After Mr. Atwater had been discharged from prison their work continued together in the lecture field until 1868 when he took up his consular work, and Miss Barton, broken down from overwork, sought rest in Europe. In 1870 came the Franco-Prussian war. She knew the suffering and distress to follow, and without thought of self or that she was in a foreign land her services were as freely given as in her own country and where the fiercest battles were fought there was she to be found. Her energies kept up until the end of this war when she again relapsed and for the next ten years she was mostly confin-



BIRTH PLACE DORENCE AND FRANCIS ATWATER, TERRYVILLE, CONN.

ed to the house. It was in the Franco-Prussian war Miss Barton became aware of the advantages of the treaty of the Red Cross, and it is due to her and her alone that the Red Cross is established in this country.

Under her supervision it covered some twenty fields of disaster such as the Johnstown flood, the Russian famine, the yellow fever scourge in Jacksonville, Fla., the Armenian massacre in Turkey and the Galveston flood. She was at the front again in the Spanish-American war, especially at the battle of San Juan hill, and although no longer young she worked day and night as long as there was work to do.

During the Spanish-American war the Red Cross under Miss Barton's direction, did much to not only succor our own soldiers who were wounded at the battle of San Juan hill, but relieved many thousands of poor Cuban reconcentrado from starvation. I was appointed treasurer of the Cuban orphan fund. I proceeded to Havana and from there with other members of the Red Cross we succored over 2,000 of these poor wretches, fed and clothed them for several months until finally relieved by the Cuban government.

In 1898, I prevailed upon Congress with the assistance of our then senators and representatives to set aside the court-martial of my brother Dorence and restore to him an honorable discharge. At that time it was the only court martial that had been set aside in the history of the country.

# THE HARTFORD COURANT.

**Had An Exceptional Staff of Writers Remembered With Deep Affection.**

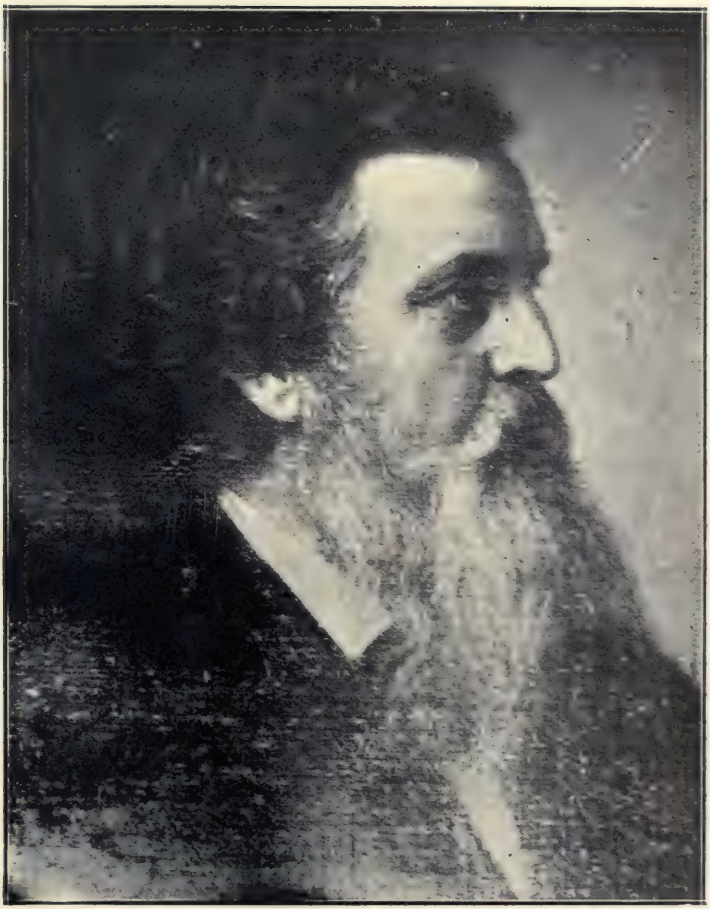
In 1879 I worked as a compositor and afterward assistant foreman of the Hartford Courant. Its foreman was Jacob Turner. He is still living and is an emeritus. "Jake" was a strict disciplinarian. I had gone from the New Haven Union, where the boys predicted I would not stay a whole night, as the Union composing room was a go as you please affair. Jake and I did have an argument the first night, but it passed over, and I was there about two years. The Courant had as fine a set of men as I ever met on its news staff. General Joseph R. Hawley, who was the leading proprietor, the firm being Hawley, Goodrich and Company, was at that time United States senator. He seldom did any writing then. Charles Dudley Warner was one of the editorial writers. His subjects were often on Egyptology. His penmanship was not easily decipherable, especially when the poor compositor had never posted himself on Egyptian geography. Stephen A. Hubbard was managing editor. He was a prince among men. Major John C. Kinney, an old war veteran, was a well informed editorial writer. There was Al. Hotchkiss, who, I remember, did a remarkable day's work.

GEN. JOSEPH R. HAWLEY.
Connecticut's Soldier Statesman.

It was early fall. In the forenoon he went to New Haven and interviewed James Gallager, an old-time war Democrat. He did his writing on the train. Coming back to Hartford he stopped off at Charter Oak park, where one of the large races with big stakes took place. This he had on paper in the early evening and before midnight had written at least two columns of local events. Then there was a minister, the Rev. William L. Gage. His sermons were featured every Monday morning. His writing was so bad that work in the composing room was commenced half an hour earlier because trying to make out the words was nearly an impossible task. There was a correspondent in Boston, George H. Munroe, who wrote under the nom-de-plume of Templeton, who sent a weekly letter. His manuscript was just as bad. The trio, Warner, Gage and Templeton, should have been made to translate their own matter for a week steady which I think would have cured them of their abominable penmanship.

Charles Hopkins Clark was in the background then, but his personality was beginning to assert itself and since has been a feature of the Courant. Mr. Clark has preached Republicanism so long and is so thoroughly imbued with it, that in his estimation Democrats should only exist to be tolerated as a necessary evil, is the general opinion expressed of him. Leaving politics aside Mr. Clark has developed the Courant into the leading daily publication of the state. While the Courant lays claim to be the oldest newspaper in the country it certainly is not in the antique class.

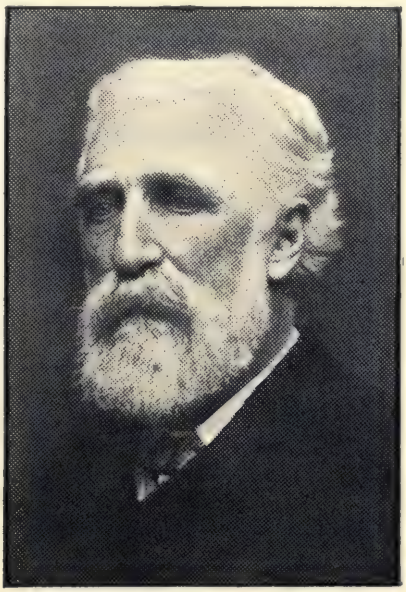
One of the cub reporters when I was there was the late Frederick C. Penfield, who afterward gained renown as a diplomat and minister in foreign countries



STEPHEN A. HUBBARD.
A Prince Among Men.

and also became a millionaire. I know of no other employe who had as much wealth thrust upon him. Penfield was a self-made man and deserved all the emoluments showered upon him.

Outside of the bad penmanship we endured, the



CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.

Courant was considered a model institution to work for. I remember all of the old crowd with affection.

Mr. Turner, humorously for years when we met, used to ask when I was coming back to join the force.

The Courant has been fortunate in having in its composing room father and two sons, Jacob, who has served sixty-five years; his son Fred, fifty-four years, and an-

other son, Burt, thirty-seven years. Count it up, an average of fifty-two years each.

I had occasion to know Gen. Hawley very intimately when he was in Washington. He was chairman of the senate military committee before whom I appeared in behalf of my brother Dorence, to set aside the unjust

JACOB TURNER.

court martial he had suffered under. Gen. Hawley and Senator Platt were successful in their efforts. With one exception it was at that time the only court martial set aside in the history of the country.

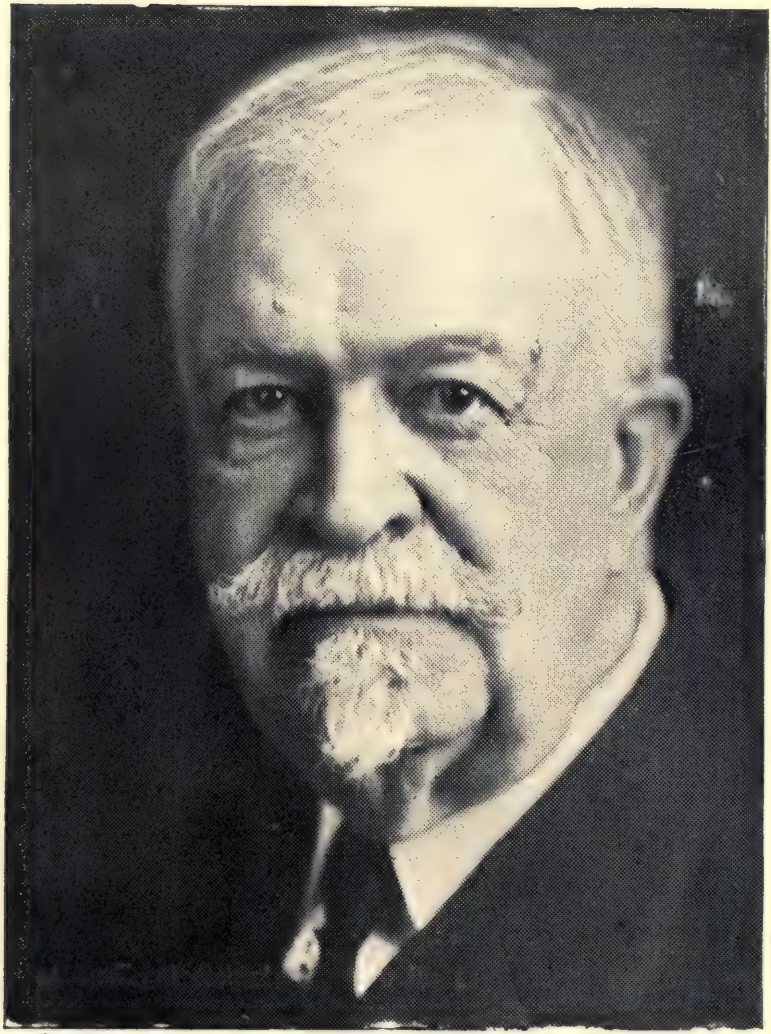
The Courant has always, as far as I know, been conducted on the open shop plan, especially its composing room. If it had not been I should not have accepted

MAJOR JOHN C. KENNEY.

employment there. The employes were not annoyed by petty union rules, the majority of which exist to make more help necessary and increase cost of publication. The open shop means that the Courant selects its own employes, good workmen, instead of having the careless and slovenly employee which the union generally picks out, foisted upon it. This probably accounts for the typographical appearance of the paper, being more free of errors and transposed lines than the general run of closed shop newspapers. The employer ceases to have any right of selection under union regulation, the discharge of an employe for poor workmanship not being tolerated, as the decision of competency is assumed by the union.

The Courant's first issue of a Sunday paper was July 4, 1881, if I remember rightly. It was the day after the assassination of James A. Garfield by the murderer Guiteau. Then followed days of anxiety running into weeks as the President lingered, his removal to Elberon, near the ocean in New Jersey, bulletins of his condition by the celebrated surgeons, and finally his death. It was a long interval of anguish and hope.

Years afterward I acquired 7,000 acres of land in the state of Washington. We colonized it with settlers. It was located, or a portion of it was, several miles from town, the men working nearby cutting timber. I walked over miles of this territory. At noon time I applied at a small cottage for something to eat. The building was a one story affair, of two rooms, scrupulously neat, lace curtains at the windows, which excited my curiosity, situated as it was in a clearing of what had been a dense forest. The owner was a Polander, speaking good English. He invited me to



CHARLES HOPKINS CLARK.

come in and said I was welcome to share such as the family had. The luncheon was well cooked and there was plenty of variety. I was willing to sit for a while and rest. I asked the man where he had come from and why he was contented to live in so secluded a spot. He told me his name was Frank Czolgos and was a brother of the murderer of President William McKinley. He had no hand in the affair and did not approve of it, yet he was hounded wherever he went. This home was the first happiness he had known since that awful tragedy.

While on the Courant my leisure hours were in the afternoon. Frequently I walked through the beautiful Bushnell park to the capitol, which I always admired. At this time it was believed the weight of the heavy dome would crack the granite blocks upon which it rested. Workmen were cutting square cavities in the stone and filling them with type metal. Hundreds of tons must have been used. Apparently the purpose was accomplished.

About this time there was celebrated Flag day, which had the largest attendance Hartford ever witnessed. The emblems of nearly or quite all the Connecticut regiments which participated in the Civil war were displayed, shot ridden and dilapidated, yet telling the awful carnage they had been borne through. They were arranged in cabinets in the west end of the capitol where coming generations can view them and know their priceless value.

While in Hartford I became acquainted with Mr. Paige, who devoted years to the invention of a marvelous typesetting machine. It was one of the wonders of the inventive age. It was composed of several thousand

parts. When it became out of order an indicator would tell its source, then by consulting a chart on the wall the trouble was soon located. Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) loaned the inventor a fortune as did others. The machine was finally placed on exhibition as a finished product. The operator could set type between two and three times as fast as any machine ever invented. For instance, instead of striking a single key on the cperating board combinations could be worked, such as the word thing, "th" was struck by fingers on the left hand and "ing" by right hand fingers. There was a corporation formed under the name of Webster and company, which built a large factory near Chicago, with special machinery, to manufacture the type-setter for the market, the price being set at $10,000. On a trip to Bermuda I met the manager of the company who told me of the glowing prospects. It was found subsequently that the machine was so complicated that the one exhibited in Hartford was the only one that could be operated, and that it was afterwards given to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, where for years it has been an object of curiositiy.

Two or three years after the Meriden Daily Journal commenced publication an early morning bulletin told of the demolition by explosion of the Park Central hotel in Hartford. I took the next train to report the disaster. Upon my arrival the militia was on guard and I was given a pass by Colonel Cone to go in and out of the guard lines. The search for the injured and dead was carried on for several days. One young lady, a member of a very respectable family whom I had been introduced to a few days before, was registered as some one's wife. She was buried under the debris but after

many hours was rescued. She was bruised and exhausted. She lay on a stretcher near where I was standing. While I did not recognize her, she did me and appealingly said in a low voice, "For God's sake don't give me away!" She was taken to the hospital under a fictitious name and the authorities never were any the wiser. The hotel did not bear a good reputation and the disaster developed many scandals.

The event had much to do with the progress of the Meriden Daily Journal, which at that time did its printing upon a flat bed press which could not be forced to print more than 2,300 copies per hour. Everybody was eager to read every detail, inasmuch as the list of survivors was not completed for two or three days. The demand for the Journal far exceeded its press facilities, even when run into the evening. I immediately made up my mind I would see that such a condition should never prevail again. I called my directors together and asked to buy a web perfecting press with a stereotyping outfit. The cost was in the neighborhood of $14,000. The question was raised if I believed it was such a good thing why did not the newspapers in Hartford and New Haven have such outfits. I said I was not concerned about those cities. My three associates promptly voted me down. They had never had any business experience. On a former occasion when I needed an extra press for our job business they had acted the same. I paid no attention to the first turn down but went ahead and installed the machine at my own expense, but when they saw it was a necessity promptly acquiesced in its purchase. In fact it was in operation before they knew it was in the building. When the second turn down came I did not hesitate,

even though it involved what in those days was considered a large sum, especially when our total capital was less than the amount to be expended. I kept my own counsel, bought the big press and when it was finished three months later it was partly set up before my directors discovered the fact. It proved my wisdom for by being able to print our edition quickly the papers were on the streets early, also in the homes, so that in less than two years the extra circulation paid the entire cost of the change. We were located in a wooden building. We had a small fire. I was alarmed what the result might be to a daily paper if our establishment was wiped out. I brought the matter to the attention of the directors and said we must have a fireproof building. Thomas L. Reilly, now sheriff of New Haven county, one of the directors, said he should vote for the new building, if he did not he would come down some morning and find it had replaced the old. In the remaining years of our association, twenty-five all told, there was no interference with any arrangement I provided.

While the Hartford disaster stirred me to action in increasing my press facilities, Hartford and New Haven papers did not follow for two or three years later.

It seemed to be my lot to be associated with tragedy in Hartford. While living in Capen street one afternoon I saw a flame of fire reaching to the ceiling in the house opposite. I rushed down stairs and up one flight where the fire had been. An old lady was lying on the floor, her clothing burning on her body. I was joined by another man. We extinguished the flames. We raised the woman and deposited her upon a bed, my hands being blistered from the fire which charred her

flesh. She had breathed in the flames, and was in great agony until death came to her relief. She was a member of the family of a Rev. Mr. Craig.

I also witnessed two hangings at different times in the Hartford county jail, when Apollos Fenn was jailer. I witnessed another execution in Bridgeport. These are not cheerful subjects, the less said the better.

In the fall of 1899 Miss Clara Barton, accompanied by Mrs. Atwater and myself, were invited to a reception in Hartford, given to Miss Barton. It was to be held in the parlors of the Y. M. C. A., but there was such an overflow it was transferred to the Congregational church, corner Asylum and High streets. Miss Barton told of the great distress prevailing among the reconcentrado children of Cuba, which in a short talk I confirmed. Quite a sum was donated for their relief. Afterwards we were the guests for the night of Colonel and Mrs. Frank Cheney of South Manchester. Mr. Cheney inquired if it would not be a good thing to teach the school children of Cuba to respect the flags of Cuba and the United States. He was willing to donate whatever number I required of different sizes, made of silk, if I would undertake the project. I was only too glad to accept the mission, which I carried out to the best of my ability.

Ex-Senator Morgan G. Bulkeley became interested in the condition of these unfortunate waifs, and sent me a check for $500, which he said he did not want to pass through any red tape, but for me to know every dollar was applied for their comfort. There were so many individual cases needing special care that not only his $500 but much more of my own money went for their relief.

# RETROSPECTION.

## Conditions As They Were, Are Now and What They Might Have Been.

In writing the doings of a life time it brings to mind what might have been. Had my people lived and I had been subject to paternal authority, a mother's devotion and the association of brothers and sisters, the usual schooling, perhaps the advantage of college education and the selection of a profession instead of a trade, I know not what the outcome might have been.

In the spring of 1866 I lived in the Eagle hotel in New Haven, of which my uncle, Lott Fenn, was proprietor. It was situated corner of George and State streets. On the opposite corner in 1638 my ancestor, Benjamin Fenn, had selected land for a residence and farm. They were stirring times in 1866 for the last of the soldiers who had served in the Civil war were arriving home and being discharged as soon as orders were sent from Washington. In the meantime martial music filled the air and parades and exercises on the Green were daily occurences.

At this time Connecticut had two capitols, one in Hartford and one in New Haven, the inauguration taking place alternately in each city. They were imposing affairs, the governor's foot guards and state militia

turning out on each occasion. These festivities were soon to be lost for my guardian did not believe hotel life was good for the bringing up of a young boy. I was sent to Southington, now the Milldale section, to live with Mr. and Mrs. William Peck, who owned a farm, only a few hundred feet distance from where my brother owned a shop in which he manufactured jewelry. Its power was furnished by a large old fashioned overshot water wheel, part of which was in a deep pit, where the water emptied and then ran off in a covered flume under the ground. He was presented with a barrel of apples which he stored in a small room, and invited me to help myself. I did so every day, giving as many as I could carry in my pockets to the employes. One day I had taken the last apple, but made considerable noise which attracted my brother's attention. They were gone so quickly he never had one. When he discovered the empty barrel he set chase after me, but when I saw him coming I ran to where the big water wheel was slowly turning, jumped on to one of the buckets and went down into the pit and from there through the half-filled sluiceway to the outside. All was commotion. The water was shut off. Men descended to the pit to look for my mangled remains or body if drowned. In the meantime to allow my brother's anger to cool off I kept out of sight for the remainder of the day. The search continued during this time and was going on until I unconcernedly returned. There was great joy at my escape, but the scolding I received rings in my ears yet.

Mrs. Peck believed a boy of my age should be in bed, summer or winter, at sundown. This was a hard blow for an active youngster, especially in June, July and

August when there were so many hours of daylight. I told my trouble to my brother's employes who devised a way to help me. They made me a rope ladder. Mrs. Peck called me from play every night as soon as the sun disappeared. I responded promptly and whistling apparently went to bed, but actually attached the ladder to a back window, descended and was off to the neighbors to stay until dark. One night I had gone over to the village store, half a mile away, where we were playing hide and seek. Soon there was a warning, "Cheese it, old man Peck is coming." I dodged behind trees, cut across lots for home, up the rope ladder, which I pulled in and hid, and was under the bed clothes. Mr. Peck returned and asked Mrs. Peck why she did not keep that tarnal boy at home. She replied I was home and had gone to bed at the usual time. He accused her of shielding me and said he had seen me at the store. To settle an argument a candle was lighted and both came up to my room. There I was fast asleep and no amount of shaking would wake me. Mr. Peck did not give up. The next day he inquired at the store of several people, but not one confirmed his eyesight, so he finally concluded he was mistaken.

On another occasion I played a prank on him when he became so exasperated he struck at me with a cart lash, the tip drawing blood on my cheek. It was just before I was to start for school when I tauntingly said I would tell all the school what a brute he was. He said he was sorry but I was up to so many devilish tricks he could not help what he had done. Then I confessed I was sorry, too, and we were good friends again.

I stayed with the Pecks one year. They proposed adoption but I did not approve. Just before I left Mr.

Peck put a tidy sum of money in the savings bank and gave me the bank book. He said in my old age, if I added to it when I could, I would have enough money to keep me. Interest was 6 per cent those days. Time rolled on. I added to the sum now and then until the original had more than doubled by compounding the interest. I had not seen Mr. Peck for years, but I did see him one day, and twenty-four hours before I drew out all my money for a certain purpose. After greeting me Mr. Peck said he supposed I had kept his money in the bank and was adding to it. . I replied I had done so until the day before. The expression of his face changed to one of disapproval instantly. He said a boy who drew his money out of a savings bank would never amount to anything. He had proposed to leave me his entire property (which was no small amount) but I had shown I was not capable of taking care of it. I told him what I intended to do with the money, my hope and ambition, but all to no purpose. Years afterwards when I had accumulated enough to own a span of horses and handsome carriage I drove up to Mr. Peck's home in Cheshire, where he had moved to, and accosting him, said "You see, Mr. Peck, what your money has done for me?" His response was that it had better been put to some good purpose. He now probably was more fully convinced than ever of what a useless end I would come to.

Soon after leaving the Pecks my brother, Dorence, who was visiting where I lived, proposed I should go to Washington to live with him and go to school. Fate was against his taking me and it was only the sting of a bee that prevented. The day before I was to start, together with some other boys, we discovered the abid-

ing place of bumble bees. We undertook to destroy them. If one rose to come for us we would rush into nearby bushes. When quiet reigned we would emerge again. I did this once too often. A bee chased me. I put for the bushes. When it seemed time to come out, I faced about, but as I did so the bee met me and stung me just above the eye. My face swelled to a monstrosity. My clothes were packed and I was to be off the next morning, but when my brother saw what had happened he was so disgusted he went off without me. It was many years afterwards before I stepped foot in Washington, but it was this same brother whose cause took me there on several occasions when I appeared before congressional committees to have set aside his unjust court martial which I was four years in accomplishing.

As a printer's devil my compensation was my board and clothes. Kids were not given much spending money fifty years ago, and, indeed, there were not so many catch-penny affairs as exist now. By working overtime in sweeping up I was given the waste paper to sell to tin peddlers. Even newspaper had rag in its makeup then which made the waste more valuable than now. At any rate, by strict economy, I had saved the large sum of $3.68. I must have been bragging of my wealth. I told of it to a tramp printer. He was taken sick a day or two after. He said if I would lend him my money when he could work again he would pay me back and make the amount $5. I presume he never had any more work. At least I was a pauper for some time afterward. Then I saved enough to buy a cheap silver watch. I believed I was an expert at this time upon stilts. With my new watch in my vest pocket I undertook to go

down some steps when a misstep tumbled me over onto a wheel of a wheelbarrow. I struck where the watch was located. When I recovered my breath, I took the remains and sold them for old silver. Perhaps these were valuable lessons. At any rate the loss of my hard-earned money that went to the tramp, made me hard-hearted and to this day I refrain from some charitable deeds from instinct of imposition. That sum of $3.68 was impressed upon my mind and I now look back upon it as the best investment I ever made.

The foundation for Palace block was being put in when I started my trade. Our office was on the third floor of the Hall and Lewis block. I went to the post office for mail several times a day. Piles were being driven by a pile driver. It was an unusual sight. The post office was located in the old Byxbee block. Sometimes it would take me half an hour to make the trip and the cursing when I returned was awful.

Arthur W. Crossley was a printer in the job department. He was a big, handsome fellow. He looked for easy money. He advertised in western papers as being a beautiful girl looking to correspond with some man with a view to matrimony. The ad brought many correspondents. When matters had progressed, the fair Alice, as Crossley called himself, asked for the price of a ticket to go west. Several responded favorably. One day when he receipted for a registered letter Pretty Alice was taken in charge by a U. S. marshal. His Masonic friends went on his bonds but the case was afterward settled. Crossley pretended to be a strict temperance man, but when I cleaned up the office the empty bottles bearing Hostetter's Bitters and California Bitters filled a barrel. These bitters were com-

posed principally of alcohol. Crossley went to Boston and thence to Washington, where he died a few years ago. He had become a prominent patent attorney.

Marcus L. Delavan, editor of the Republican, was another outward temperance advocate, but secretly a Hostetter's Bitters fiend, which seemed to be a common practice in those days. His rival, Luther G. Riggs, made his hypocrisy so evident that Delavan soon left for other quarters.

There was a foolish man named Ed. Lawrence, who walked the streets telling passersby "The band is playing." The boys plagued Ed. on every opportunity, but generally made their escape. One day I was gazing in a store window, not knowing Ed. was in the vicinity, when he made good use of the opportunity by giving me a slap with his flat hand on my cheek. I carried papers to his mother's house. She said she hoped I was not one of those naughty boys who made fun of her son, at the same time giving me a cookie. A man named Lucas was digging a well. Ed. was winding the windlass to draw the dirt from the bottom. One noon Lucas stepped on the bucket to be drawn up, but when nearing the top Ed. told Lucas the band was playing, at the same time letting go the handle precipitating Lucas to the bottom.

In 1871 there was a big fire under the roof of the main factory of the Britannia shop. The two hand pumps owned by the city were placed side of Harbor brook and manned vigorously by volunteers. Hartford was called upon and sent a fire engine to assist. Whisky was served in water pails. When the sun arose there were several lying on the bank of the brook dead to the world. I watched the conflagration from an elevation

on Hobart street. It was one of the largest fires Meriden experienced. I expect the insurance companies paid for a lot of unsalable goods stored in the garret. If it had not been for the fire wall which divided the factory it probably would have been a total loss.

At this time two brothers and myself were working in the Recorder office. We all mastered every detail of the printing industry, but soon scattered to work in various places. One time when out of a job I returned to my native village and engaged in the livery business with my brother-in-law. Steam trains and trolleys were not in evidence. Drummers and others had to be driven to other towns. I had so much driving to do that two and three horses would be required to do my work alone. I often would go to sleep in the carriage when I had a trusty horse. On one occasion, it was a night of blackness, the animal stopped. I could not urge him to go on. I alighted and nearby I heard rushing water. An examination proved a freshet had carried a bridge away. I could only show my appreciation to my dumb friend by giving an extra allowance of oats.

My next adventure was on a cold, crispy morning, down to zero, when I drove out with a span of horses. They felt fine and required a strong hold on the reins. When I stopped under a shed my fingers were frozen, my toes, nose and ears also, but a vigorous rubbing in snow by friends and swallowing a glass of cider brandy, I was ready for my return trip. Our barn was burned down with most of the animals. Only two escaped. They had wandered several miles when I found them. It was cold weather. I mounted one without saddle or bridle, and started for home. They were in fine fettle. They commenced to race, they kicked and bit at each

other and often reared up. I held on, my arms around the horse's neck, but when I saw an inviting snowdrift I dropped off. It had been a vigorous half hour. The lure of the print shop took me back to my beloved trade.

Newspaper life is not all roses. People like to read about the other fellow, but put up a stiff protest when the table is turned. We printed one item which was taken vigorous exception to. I told the man he should be glad that what we printed was not the worst we knew about him. I added that probably not a family in town existed that there was not a skeleton in the closet that the reporters or police did not know of. He queried what would you say of Isaac C. Lewis' family. I replied that this might be an exception. The very next day Mr. Lewis stopped and asked if I would do him a favor. He said a relative had been arrested. If I must print the news, please leave out that he was a nephew of Isaac C. Lewis.

A man was arrested for drunkenness and taken to the police station in a patrol wagon. He gave the name of Zina E. Dowd, a highly respected citizen. A new reporter printed the statement. When I read the item I knew a mistake had been made and wrote a correction for the next evening's paper. Mr. Dowd was off on a long trip for his concern. About six weeks afterward he called at the office. He wanted to know how the story started. I told him, said I was very sorry and now he was home would repeat the correction. Mr. Dowd said no. He did not want it rehashed again as only a few had spoken to him, but if it was printed a second time probably the notoriety would spread.

Levi Frost, of Marion, the southwestern village of Southington, was an old time bolt manufacturer. When

a boy I worked for him eleven days. Whale oil was used when the machines were cutting threads on the bolts. The worker was covered with the oil, which was very disagreeable, and I quit. When I was grown up Mr. Frost and I were close friends. He generally drove a span of spirited horses. When driving into Waterbury he was arrested for exceeding the speed limit. He was fined $10. He offered the court another $10 bill as he said he should drive out as he drove in. His wife often told him he would meet with some accident. His carriage was tipped over in Meriden but not much damage done. He came into my office, put a big roll of bills on the table and said to take what I wanted to. He did not mind the cost as long as his wife did not hear of the accident. I told him the news could not be suppressed in that way; while the story would be printed I would see that it was not magnified. Mr. Frost generally carried a large sum of money and it was a wonder he was not waylaid on his lonely drives.

Looking backward and during my long career as a newspaper man one after another of these occurrences come to my mind. I could write hundreds of them but will not weary my readers. I will add that I am glad I began when I did for the apprentice was taught something besides how to kill time, which seems to be the height of ambition of the young men of to-day. Newspapers printed the news, which is what they were created for. Now they are hurly-burly affairs, given over to features, editions are faked, printed hours ahead of schedule, and news a day or two old fills the place of the happenings of the hour.

If I were a few years younger it would be my delight to train up a set of young men as reporters, editors,

compositors, proofreaders and an office force in my own way to print a newspaper of limited pages, to gather the day's news up to four o'clock and print it the same afternoon; make the local news the feature; put the reporters on their mettle to get "beats" instead of going around in groups, and go back to the good old style, say like the New York Sun used to be, when Charles A. Dana was at its head. I believe there is a field for the old-fashioned newspaper and a paying one, too.

# PROPHECY.

Although I was unable to accomplish as much as I desired to improve Meriden, the foundation is set to make it one of the most progressive and desirable cities of the state. Like conquering the air with flying machines and the water with submarines, the air and water existed but it took man thousands of years to develop useful inventions to fly and submerge at will; so with telegraphy, telephone and radio, they all came in time.

Situated as Meriden is with its surrounding hills and mountains, its sitely Hubbard park, its wonderful West Peak, its beautiful homes, its skilled mechanics, its fine sewer system, its useful manufactories, its many inventors, its handsome public buildings, such as the library, City hall, churches, old ladies' home, Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., Home Bank building, theaters and hospital, it only needs a little more effort to put it in the front ranks.

I predict the day is not far off when its public officials will be selected for broadness of mind, men of experience in development, men who will cast aside partisan feeling, and men of foresight; men who will see that the thoroughfares are widened; that its disgraceful shacks are eliminated; that its streets are well paved and sidewalks attended to; that all sources of water supply are husbanded; that its tax rate is kept at a

minimum; that every dollar brings its equivalent in service or material; that it will own its electric and gas service, keeping these charges moderate; and when all these things have been accomplished it will become a model city.

Meriden is situated inland, it has no cheap water navigation, only one railroad for transportation and no natural advantages to induce manufacturers to locate in it, except that it is the home of skilled mechanics which enables the city to produce the best in art and staple wares. Its future development must depend on low taxation, good schools, churches, hospital, low rates for water, gas and electricity and every inducement for its people to own their own homes to save house rent; the savings bank must be more liberal; there must be more co-operation, and its small town ways must give way to a new era of progress.

This need not be slow like conquering the air and water, but if entered into with a whole heartedness its results can be reasonably quick and it can then boast of a population from 50,000 to 100,000.

The people must cease being penny counters, when by their smallness, dollars are flying out of the window. They must pattern after cities which by combination do big things. They must think big in order to outlive so many years of penuriousness.

SIX GENERATIONS OF ATWATER.
Wm. Cutler Atwater, Coal King of 1 Broadway, New York, His Ancestors and Sons.

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